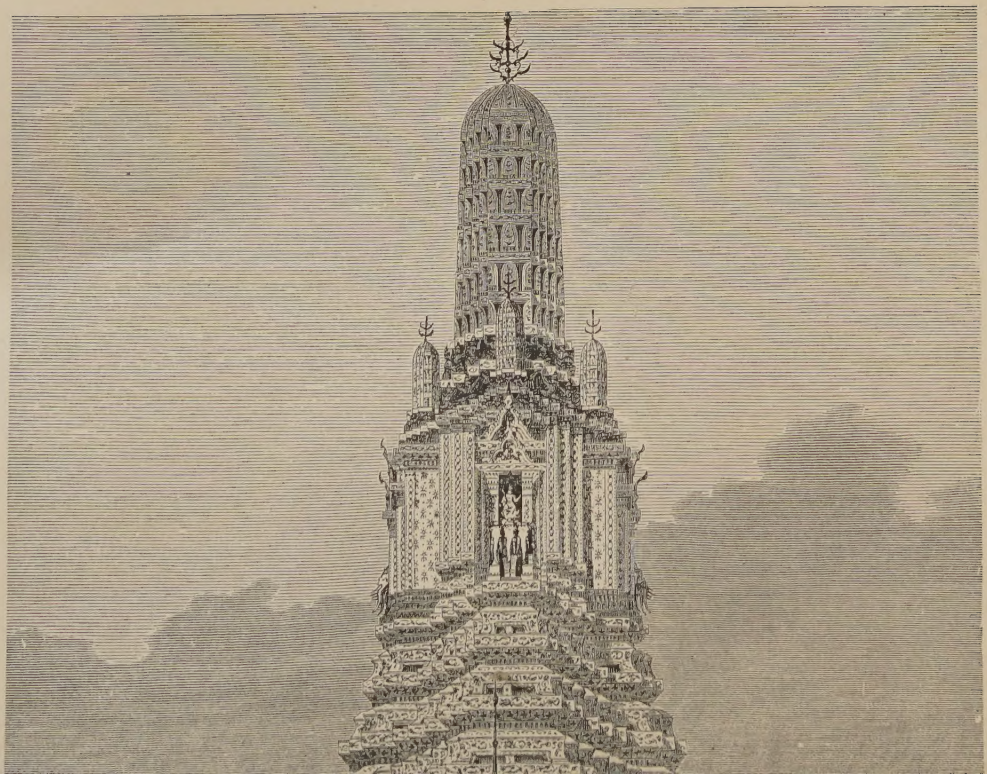

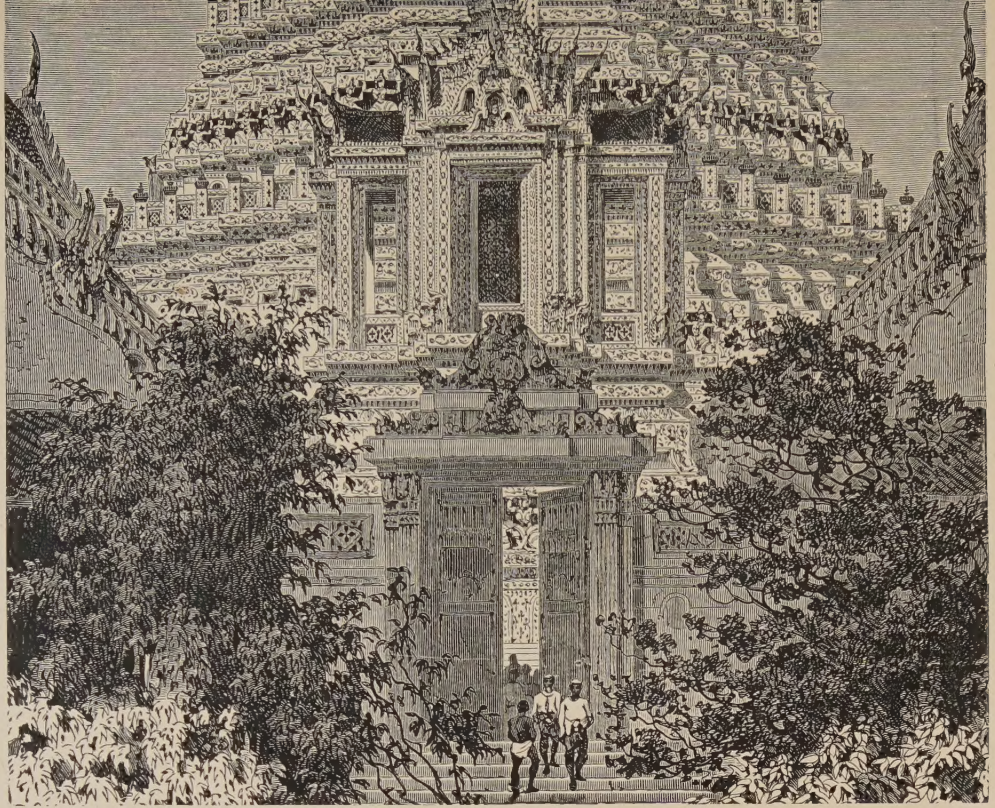

GREAT PAGODA WAT CHANG.

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# SIAM

## THE LAND OF THE WHITE ELEPHANT

## *AS IT WAS AND IS*

COMPILED AND ARRANGED BY

GEORGE B. BACON

REVISED BY

FREDERICK WELLS WILLIAMS

NEW YORK

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# REVISER'S NOTE

The present editor's aim in revising this little volume has been to leave untouched, so far as possible, Mr. Bacon's compilation, omitting only such portions as were inaccurate or obsolete, and adding rather sparingly from the narratives of a few recent travellers. The authoritative history and description of Siam has yet to be written, and until this work appears the accounts of Pallegoix, of Bowring, and of Mouhot convey as satisfactory and accurate impressions of the country as those of later writers. Though the wonderful ruins at Angkor are now technically within the confines of Siam, their consideration still belongs to a treatise on Cambodia, and this as a separate country could not fairly be joined to Siam in carrying out the plan of the series. In other respects, without attempting to be exhaustive, the reviser's endeavor has been to neglect no important part or feature of the kingdom.

The regeneration effected in Siam during the past half century presents a suggestive contrast to that ebullition of new life which has within an even briefer period transformed despotic Japan into a free and ambitious state. Here, as there, the stranger is impressed with those outward symbols of nineteenth-century life, the agencies of steam, gas, and electric-

ity that appear in many busy centres in whimsical incongruity to their Oriental setting; but these are the adjuncts rather than the essentials of that Western civilization which both countries are striving to imitate. In Siam, it must be confessed, there is no such evidence of popular awakening as now directs the world's attention to the Mikado's empire. The languor and content of life in the tropics disposes the people to seek new ideals and accept new institutions less eagerly than under Northern skies. Siam's policy of gradual progress toward a condition of higher enlightenment is in admirable accordance with her needs, and promises to achieve its purpose with no such risks of reaction or shipwreck as beset the course of more ambitious states in the East.

F. W. W.

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# SIAM

## CHAPTER I.

### EARLY INTERCOURSE WITH SIAM—RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES

THE acquaintance of the Christian world with the kingdom and people of Siam dates from the beginning of the sixteenth century, and is due to the adventurous and enterprising spirit of the Portuguese. It is difficult for us, in these days when Portugal occupies a position so inconsiderable, and plays a part so insignificant, among the peoples of the earth, to realize what great achievements were wrought in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by the peaceful victories of the early navigators and discoverers from that country, or by the military conquests which not seldom followed in the track of their explorations. It was while Alphonso d'Albuquerque was occupied with a military expedition in Malacca, that he seized the occasion to open diplomatic intercourse with Siam. A lieutenant under his command, who was fitted for the service by an experience of captivity during which he had acquired the Malay language, was selected for the mission. He was well received by the king, and came

back to his general, bringing royal presents and proposals to assist in the siege of Malacca. So cordial a response to the overtures of the Portuguese led to the more formal establishment of diplomatic and commercial intercourse. And before the middle of the sixteenth century a considerable number of Portuguese had settled, some of them in the neighborhood of the capital (Ayuthia), and some of them in the provinces of the peninsula of Malacca, at that time belonging to the kingdom of Siam. One or two adventurers, such as De Seixas and De Mello, rose to positions of great power and dignity under the Siamese king. And for almost a century the Portuguese maintained, if not an exclusive, certainly a pre-eminent, right to the commercial and diplomatic intercourse which they had inaugurated.

As in other parts of the East Indies, however, the Dutch presently began to dispute the supremacy of their rivals, and, partly by the injudicious and presumptuous arrogance of the Portuguese themselves, succeeded in supplanting them. The cool and mercenary cunning of the greedy Hollanders was more than a match for the proud temper of the hot-blooded Dons. And as, in the case of Java, the story of Sumatra lives in history to witness what shameless and unscrupulous wickedness commercial rivalry could lead to; so in Siam there is for fifty years a story of intrigue and greed, over-reaching itself first on one side, and then on the other. First, the Portuguese were tumbled out of their exclusive privileges. And then in turn the Dutch were obliged to surrender theirs. To-day there are still visible in the

jungle, near the mouth of the Meinam River, the ruins of the Amsterdam which grew up between the years 1672 and 1725, under the enterprise of the Dutch East India Company, protected and fostered by the Siamese Government. And to-day, also, the descendants of the Portuguese, easy to be recognized, notwithstanding the mixture of blood for many generations, hold insignificant or menial offices about the capital and court.

As a result of Portuguese intercourse with Siam, there came the introduction of the Christian religion by Jesuit missionaries, who, as in China and Japan, were quick to follow in the steps of the first explorers. No hindrance was put in the way of the unmolested exercise of religious rites by the foreign settlers. Two churches were built; and the ecclesiastics in charge of the church at Ayuthia had begun to acquire some of that political influence which is so irresistible a temptation to the Roman Catholic missionary, and so dangerous a possession when he has once acquired it. It is probable enough (although the evidence does not distinctly appear) that this tendency of religious zeal toward political intrigue inflamed the animosity of the Dutch traders, and afforded them a convenient occasion for undermining the supremacy of their rivals. However this may be, the Christian religion did not make any great headway among the Siamese people. And while they conceded to the foreigners religious liberty, they showed no eagerness to receive from them the gift of a new religion.

In the year 1604 the Siamese king sent an ambas-

sador to the Dutch colony at Bantam, in the island of Java. And in 1608 the same ambassador extended his journey to Holland, expressing "much surprise at finding that the Dutch actually possessed a country of their own, and were not a nation of pirates, as the Portuguese had always insinuated." The history of this period of the intercourse between Siam and the European nations, abundantly proves that shrewdness, enterprise, and diplomatic skill were not on one side only.

Between Siam and France there was no considerable intercourse until the reign of Louis XIV., when an embassy of a curiously characteristic sort was sent out by the French monarch. The embassy was ostentatiously splendid, and made great profession of a religious purpose no less important than the conversion of the Siamese king to Christianity. The origin of the mission was strangely interesting, and the record of it, even after the lapse of nearly two hundred years, is so lively and instructive that it deserves to be reproduced, in part, in another chapter of this volume. The enterprise was a failure. The king refused to be converted, and was able to give some dignified and substantial reasons for distrusting the religious interest which his "esteemed friend, the king of France," had taken "in an affair which seems to belong to God, and which the Divine Being appears to have left entirely to our discretion." Commercially and diplomatically, also, as well as religiously, the embassy was a failure. The Siamese prime minister (a Greek by birth, a Roman Catholic by religion), at whose instigation the French king

had acted, soon after was deposed from his office, and came to his death by violence. The Jesuit priests were put under restraint and detained as hostages, and the military force which accompanied the mission met with an inglorious fate. A scheme which seemed at first to promise the establishment of a great dominion tributary to the throne of France, perished in its very conception.

The Government of Spain had early relations with Siam, through the Spanish colony in the Philippine Islands; and on one or more occasions there was an interchange of courtesies and good offices between Manilla and Ayuthia. But the Spanish never had a foothold in the kingdom, and the occasional and unimportant intercourse referred to ceased almost wholly until, during the last fifty years, and even the last twenty, a new era of commercial activity has brought the nations of Europe and America into close and familiar relations with the Land of the White Elephant.

The relations of the kingdom of Siam with its immediate neighbors have been full of the vicissitudes of peace and war. There still remains some trace of a remote period of partial vassalage to the Chinese Empire, in the custom of sending gifts—which were originally understood, by the recipients at least, if not by the givers, to be tribute to Peking. With Burmah and Pegu on the one side, and with Cambodia and Cochin China on the other, there has existed from time immemorial a state of jealous hostility. The boundaries of Siam, eastward and westward, have fluctuated with the successes or defeats of the Siam-

ese arms. Southward the deep gulf shuts off the country from any neighbors, whether good or bad, and for more than three centuries this has been the highway of a commerce of unequal importance, sometimes very active and remunerative, but never wholly interrupted even in the period of the most complete reactionary seclusion of the kingdom.

The new era in Siam may be properly dated from the year 1854, when the existing treaties between Siam on the one part, and Great Britain and the United States on the other part, were successfully negotiated. But before this time, various influences had been quietly at work to produce a change of such singular interest and importance. The change is indeed a part of that great movement by which the whole Oriental world has been re-discovered in our day; by which China has been started on a new course of development and progress; by which Japan and Corea have been made to lay aside their policy of hostile seclusion. It is hard to fix the precise date of a movement which is the result of tendencies so various and so numerous, and which is evidently, as yet, only at the beginning of its history. But the treaty negotiated by Sir John Bowring, as the ambassador of Great Britain, and that negotiated by the Honorable Townsend Harris, as the ambassador of the United States, served to call public attention in those two countries to a land which was previously almost unheard of except by geographical students. There was no popular narrative of travel and exploration. Indeed, there had been no travel and exploration much beyond the walls of Bangkok or the ruins of

Ayuthia. The German, Mandelslohe, is the earliest traveller who has left a record of what he saw and heard. His visit to Ayuthia, to which he gave the name which subsequent travellers have agreed in bestowing on Bangkok, the present capital—"The Venice of the East"—was made in 1537. The Portuguese, Mendez Pinto, whose visit was made in the course of the same century, has also left a record of his travels, which is evidently faithful and trustworthy. We have also the records of various embassies, and the narratives of missionaries (both the Roman Catholic and, during the present century, the American Protestant missionaries), who have found time, amid their arduous and discouraging labors, to furnish to the Christian world much valuable information concerning the people among whom they have chosen to dwell.

"Of these missionary records, by far the most complete and the most valuable is the work of Bishop Pallegoix (published in French in the year 1854), entitled "Description du Royaume Thai ou Siam." The long residence of the excellent Bishop in the country of which he wrote, and in which, not many years afterward (in 1862) he died, sincerely lamented and honored, fitted him to speak with intelligent authority; and his book was of especial value at the time when it was published, because the Western Powers were engaged that very year in the successful attempt to renew and to enlarge their treaties with Siam. To Bishop Pallegoix the English envoy, Sir John Bowring, is largely indebted, as he does not fail to confess, for a knowledge of the

history, manners, and customs of the realm, which helped to make the work of his embassy more easy, and also for much of the material which gives the work of Bowring himself ("The Kingdom and People of Siam," London, 1857) its value.

Since Sir John Bowring's time the interior of Siam has been largely explored, and especially by one adventurous traveller, Henry Mouhot, who lost his life in the jungles of Laos while engaged in his work of exploration. With him begins our real knowledge of the interior of Siam, and its partly dependent neighbors Laos and Cambodia. The scientific results of his travel are unfortunately not presented in such orderly completeness as would have been given to them had Mouhot lived to arrange and to supplement the details of his fragmentary and outlined journal. But notwithstanding these necessary defects, Mouhot's book deserves a high place, as giving the most adventurous exploration of a country which appears more interesting the more and better it is known. The great ruins of Angkor (or Angeor) Wat, for example, near the boundary which separates Siam from Cambodia, were by him for the first time examined, measured, and reported with some approach to scientific exactness.

Among more recent and easily accessible works on the country, from some of which we have borrowed, may be mentioned, F. Vincent's, "Land of the White Elephant," 1874, A. Gréhan's, "Royaume de Siam," fourth edition, Paris, 1878, "Siam and Laos, as seen by our American Missionaries," Philadelphia, 1884, Carl Bock's "Temples and Elephants," London, 1884,

A. R. Colquhoun's, "Among the Shans," 1885, L. de Carné's, "Travels in Indo-China, etc.," 1872, Miss M. L. Cort's, "Siam, or the Heart of Farther India," 1886, and John Anderson's, "English Intercourse with Siam," 1890. The most authoritative map of Siam is that published in the "Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society," London, 1888, by Mr. J. McCarthy, Superintendent of Surveys in Siam.

## CHAPTER II.

### GEOGRAPHY OF SIAM

THE following description of the country is quoted with some emendations from Mr. Carl Bock's "Temples and Elephants."

The European name for this land has been derived from the Malay word *Sayam* (or *sajam*), meaning "brown," but this is a conjecture. The natives call themselves *Thai*, *i.e.*, "free," and their country *Muang Thai*, "the kingdom of the free."

Including its dependencies, the Lao states in the north, and the Malay states in the south, Siam extends from latitude 20° 20′ N. to exactly 4° S., while, with its Cambodian provinces, its extreme breadth is from longitude 97° E. to about 108° E. The northern frontier of the Lao dependencies has not been defined, but it may be said, roughly, to lie north of the twentieth parallel, beyond the great bend of the Mekong River, the high range to the east of which separates Siam from Annam. To the south lie Cambodia and the Gulf of Siam, stretching a long arm down into the Malay Peninsula. On the west it abuts on Upper and Lower Burma, both now British possessions.

Through Siam and Lao run two great mountain chains, both radiating from Yunnan through the

INUNDATION OF THE MEINAM.

Shan states. The eastern chain stretches in a S.S.E. direction from Kiang Tsen right down to Cambodia, while the western chain extends in a southerly direction through the Malay Peninsula. Their height rises sometimes to 9,000 feet, but it does not often seem to exceed 5,000; limestone, gneiss, and granite appear to form the main composition of the rocks.

Between these two mountain-chains, with their ramifications, lies the great alluvial plain of the Meinam, a magnificent river, of which the Portuguese poet Camoens sings (Lusiad X. cxxv.):

> "The Menam now behold, whose waters take
> Their sources in the great Chiamai lake,"

in which statement, however, the bard was misinformed, the source being a mountain stream on the border of the Shan states, but within Lao territory, and not, as is generally marked on charts, in Yunnan. Near Rahang the main stream is joined by the Mei Wang, flowing S.W. from Lakon, the larger river being called above this junction the Mei Ping. The other great tributary, the Pak-nam-po, also called the Meinam Yome, joins it in latitude 15° 45′, after flowing also in a S.W. direction.

To the annual inundation of the Meinam and its tributaries the fertility of the soil is due. Even as far up as in the Lao states the water rises from eight to ten feet during the rainy season. A failure of these inundations would be fatal to the rice crop, so that Siam is almost as much as Egypt a single river valley, upon whose alluvial deposits the welfare of millions depends. In this broad valley are to be

found the forty-one political divisions which make up Siam proper.

The second great river of importance is the Bang-Pa Kong, which has its source in a barrier range of irregular mountains, separating the elevated plateau of Korat from the alluvial plains extending to the head of the Gulf of Siam. The river meanders through the extensive paddy-lands and richly cultivated districts of the northeast provinces, and falls into the sea twenty miles east of the Meinam. Another considerable river is the Meklong, which falls into the sea about the same distance to the west of Bangkok; at its mouth is a large and thriving village of the same name. This is the great rice district, and from Meklong all up the river to Kanburi a large number of the population are Chinese. In this valley are salt-pits, on which the whole kingdom depends for its supply. The Meklong is connected with the Meinam by means of a canal, which affords a short cut to Bangkok, avoiding the sea-passage.

A third river system, that of the Mekong, much the largest of all the rivers in Indo-China, drains the extreme north and east of Siam. This huge stream, which is also mentioned in Camoens' Lusiad, takes its rise near the sources of the Yangtse Kiang in Eastern Thibet, and belongs in nearly half its course to China. It was partly explored by M. Mouhot, and later (in 1868) by Lagrée's expedition, who found it, in spite of the great body of water, impracticable for navigation. M. de Carné, one of the exploration party, thus sums up the results of the search for a new trade route into Southern China: "The difficulties

the river offers begin at first, starting from the Cambodian frontier, and they are very serious, if not insurmountable. If it were attempted to use steam on this part of the Mekong the return would be most dangerous. At Khong an absolutely impassable barrier, as things are, stands in the way. Between Khong and Bassac the waters are unbroken and deep, but the channel is again obstructed a short distance from the latter. From the mouth of the river Ubone the Mekong is nothing more than an impetuous torrent, whose waters rush along a channel more than a hundred yards deep by hardly sixty across. Steamers can never plough the Mekong as they do the Amazon or the Mississippi, and Saigon can never be united to the western provinces of China by this immense water-way, whose waters make it mighty indeed, but which seems after all to be a work unfinished."

Of the tributary states, the Laos, who occupy the Mekong valley and spread themselves among the wilds between Tongking, China, and Siam, are probably the least known. In physique and speech they are akin to the Siamese, and are regarded by some writers as being the primitive stock of that race. They have some claims as a people of historical importance, constituting an ancient and powerful kingdom whose capital Vein-shan, was destroyed by Siam in 1828. Since then they have remained subject to Siam, being governed partly by native hereditary princes, duly invested with gold dish, betel-box, spittoon, and teapot sent from Bangkok, and partly by officers appointed by the Siamese government.

Their besetting sin is slave-hunting, which was until recently pursued with the acquiescence of the Siam authorities, to the terror of the hill-tribes within their reach and to their own demoralization. Apart from the passions associated with this infamous trade the Laos are for the most part an inoffensive, unwarlike race, fond of music, and living chiefly on a diet of rice, vegetables, fruits, fish, and poultry. Pure and mixed, they number altogether perhaps some one million five hundred thousand.

The most important of the Malay states is Quedha, in Siamese Muang Sai. Its population of half a million Malays is increased by some twenty thousand Chinese and perhaps five thousand of other races. The country is leve land covered with fine forests, where elephants, tigers, and rhinoceroses abound. A high range of mountains separates Quedha from the provinces of Patani (noted for its production of rice and tin) and Songkhla. These again are divided from the province of Kalantan by the Banara River, and from Tringanu by the Batut River. In Ligor province, called in Siamese Lakhon, three-fourths of the population are Siamese. The gold and silversmiths of Ligor have a considerable reputation for their vessels of the precious metals inlaid with a black enamel.

As to the Cambodian provinces under Siamese rule the following particulars are extracted from a paper by M. Victor Berthier:

The most important provinces are those lying to the west, Battambang and Korat. The former of these is situated on the west of the Grand Lake (Tonle

Sap), and supports a population of about seventy thousand, producing salt, fish, rice, wax, and cardamoms, besides animals found in the forests. Two days' march from Battambang is the village of Angkor Borey (the royal town), the great centre of the beeswax industry, of which 24,000 pounds are sent yearly to Siam. Thirty miles from this place is situated the auriferous country of Tu'k Cho, where two Chinese companies have bought the monopoly of the mines. The metal is obtained by washing the sand extracted from wells about twenty feet deep, at which depth auriferous quartz is usually met, but working as they do the miners have no means of getting ore from the hard stone.

Korat is the largest province and is peopled almost entirely by Cambodians. Besides its chief town of the same name it contains a great number of villages with more than eleven district centres, and contains a population estimated at fifty thousand or sixty thousand. Angkor, the most noted of the Cambodian provinces, is now of little importance, being thinly populated and chiefly renowned for the splendor of its ancient capital, whose remarkable ruins are the silent witnesses of a glorious past. The present capital is Siem Rap, a few miles south of which is the hill called Phnom Krom (Inferior Mount), which becomes an island during the annual inundation. The other Cambodian provinces now ruled by Siam are almost totally unknown by Europeans.

The population of Siam has never been officially counted, but is approximately estimated by Europeans at from six to twelve millions. According to Mr.

Archibald Colquhoun, however, this is based upon an entirely erroneous calculation. "Prince Prisdang assured me," he says,* "that Sir John Bowring had made a great mistake in taking the list of those who were liable to be called out for military service as the gross population of the kingdom; and that if that list were multiplied by five, it would give a nearer approximation to the population. M. Mouhot says that a few years before 1862 the native registers showed for the male sex (those who were inscribed), 2,000,000 Siamese, 1,000,000 Laotians (or Shans), 1,000,000 Malays, 1,500,000 Chinese, 350,000 Cambodians, 50,000 Peguans, and a like number composed of various tribes inhabiting the mountain-ranges. Taking these statistics and multiplying them by five, which Bishop Pallegoix allows is a fair way of computing from them, we should have a population of 29,950,000. To this would have to be added the Chinese and Peguans who had not been born in the country, and were therefore not among the inscribed; also the hill tribes that were merely tributary and therefore merely paid by the village, as well as about one-seventh of the above total for the ruling classes, their families and slaves. This total would give at least 35,000,000 inhabitants for Siam Proper, to which would have to be added about 3,000,000 for its dependencies, Zimmé (Cheung Mai), Luang Prabang, and Kiang Tsen,—a gross population, therefore, of about 38,000,000 for the year 1860." On the other hand, Mr. McCarthy, a competent judge, considers the government estimate of ten million too high.

* Amongst the Shans. London, 1885.

## CHAPTER III.

### OLD SIAM—ITS HISTORY

THE date at which any coherent and trustworthy history of Siam must commence is the founding of the sacred city of Ayuthia (the former capital of the kingdom), in the year 1350 of the Christian era. Tradition, more or less obscure and fabulous, does indeed reach back into the remote past so far as the fifth century, B.C. According to the carefully arranged chronology of Bishop Pallegoix, gathered from the Siamese annals, which annals, however, are declared by His Majesty the late King to be "all full of fable, and are not in satisfaction for believe," the origin of the nation can be traced back, if not into indefinite space of time, at least into the vague and uncertain "woods," and ran on this wise:

"There were two Brahminical recluses dwelling in the woods, named Sătxănalăi and Sîtthĭmŏngkŏn, coeval with Plua Khôdŏm (the Buddha), and one hundred and fifty years of age, who having called their numerous posterity together, counselled them to build a city having seven walls, and then departed to the woods to pass their lives as hermits.

"But their posterity, under the leadership of Bathămărât, erected the city Săvănthe vălôk, or

Sangkhălôk, about the year 300 of the era of Phra Khôdŏm (B.C. about 243).

"Bathămărât founded three other cities, over which he placed his three sons. The first he appointed ruler in the city of Hărĭpunxăi, the second in Kamphôxă năkhon, the third in Phĕtxăbun. These four sovereignties enjoyed, for five hundred years or more, the uttermost peace and harmony under the rule of the monarchs of this dynasty."

The places named in this chronicle are all in the valley of the upper Meinam, in the "north country," and the fact of most historical value which the chronicle indicates is that the Siamese came from the north and from the west, bringing with them the government and the religion which they still possess. The most conspicuous personage in these ancient annals is one Phra Ruàng, "whose advent and glorious reign had been announced by a communication from Gaudama himself, and who possessed, in consequence of his merits, a white elephant with black tusks;" he introduced the Thai alphabet, ordained a new era which is still in vogue, married the daughter of the emperor of China, and consolidated the petty princedoms of the north country into one sovereignty. His birth was fabulous and his departure from the world mysterious. He is the mythic author of the Siamese History. Born of a queen of the Nakhae (a fabulous race dwelling under the earth), who came in the way of his father, the King of Hărĭpunxăi, one day when the king had "retired to a mountain for the purpose of meditation, he was discovered accidentally by a huntsman,

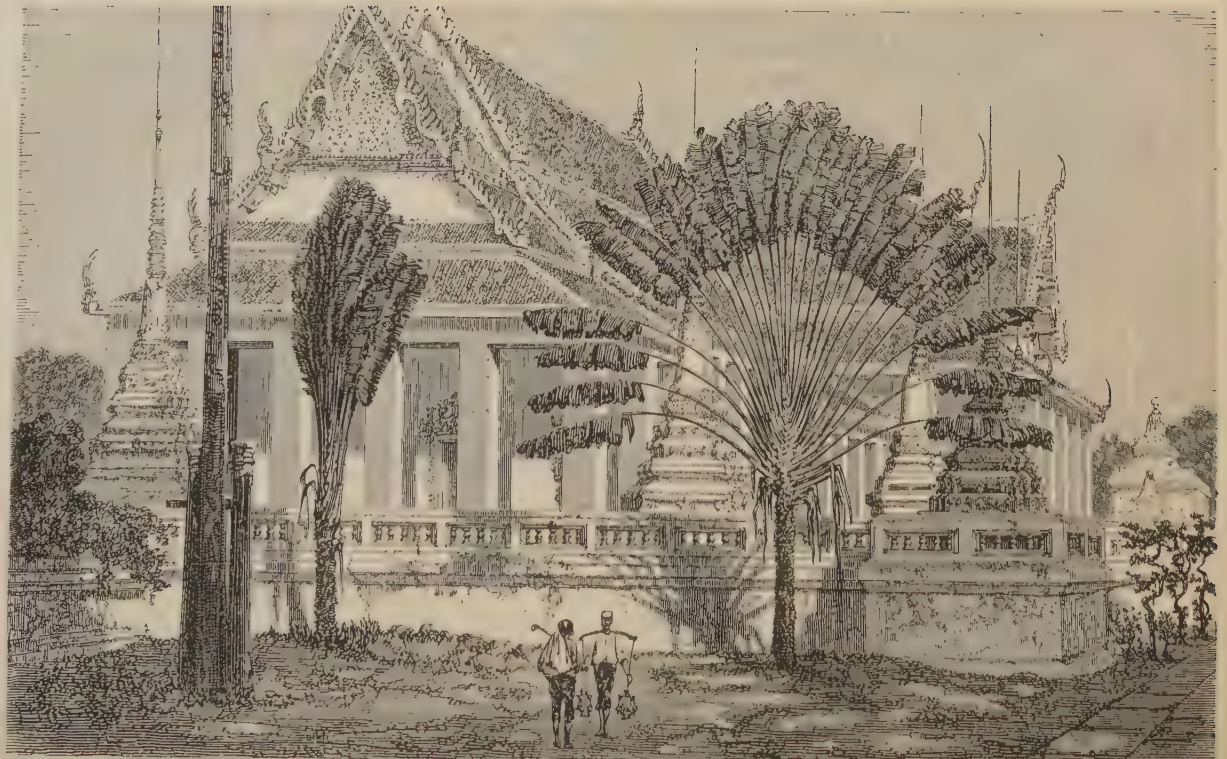
and was recognized by the royal ring which his father had given to the lady from the underworld. When he had grown up he entered the court of his father, and the palace trembled. He was acknowledged as the heir, and his great career proceeded with uninterrupted glory. At last he went one day to the river and disappeared." It was thought he had rejoined his mother, the Queen of the Nakhae, and would pass the remainder of his life in the realms beneath. The date of Phra Ruàng's reign is given as the middle of the fifth century of the Christian era.

After him there came successive dynasties of kings, ending with Phăja Uthong, who reigned seven years in Northern Cambodia, but being driven from his kingdom by a severe pestilence, or having voluntarily abandoned it (as another account asserts), in consequence of explorations which had discovered "the southern country," and found it extremely fertile and abundant in fish, he emigrated with his people and arrived at a certain island in the Meinam, where he "founded a new city, Krŭng thèph măhá năkhon Síajŭthăja—a great town impregnable against angels: Siamese era 711, A.D. 1349."

Here, at last, we touch firm historic ground, although there is still in the annals a sufficient admixture of what the late king happily designates as "fable." The foundations of Ayuthia, the new city, were laid with extraordinary care. The soothsayers were consulted, and decided that "in the 712th year of the Siamese era, on the sixth day of the waning moon, the fifth month, at ten minutes before

four o'clock, the foundation should be laid. Three palaces were erected in honor of the king; and vast countries, among which were Malacca, Tennasserim, Java, and many others whose position cannot now be defined, were claimed as tributary states." King Uthong assumed the title Phra-Rama-thi-bodi, and after a reign of about twenty years in his new capital handed down to his son and to a long line of successors, a large, opulent, and consolidated realm. The word Phra, which appears in his title and in that of almost all his successors to the present day, is said by Sir John Bowring to be "probably either derived from or of common origin with the Pharaoh of antiquity." But the resemblance between the words is simply accidental, and the connection which he seeks to establish is not for a moment to be admitted.

His Majesty the late King of Siam, a man of remarkable character and history, was probably, while he lived, the best-informed authority on all matters relating to the history of his kingdom. Fortunately, being a man of scholarly habits and literary tastes, he has left on record a concise and readable historical sketch, from which we cannot do better than to make large quotations, supplementing it when necessary with details gathered from other sources. The narrative begins with the foundation of the royal city, Ayuthia, of which an account has already been given on a previous page. The method of writing the proper names is that adopted by the king himself, who was exact, even to a pedantic extent, in regard to such matters. The king's English, however,



which was often droll and sometimes unintelligible, has in this instance been corrected by the missionary under whose auspices the sketch was first published.*

"Ayuthia when founded was gradually improved and became more and more populous by natural increase, and the settlement there of families of Laos, Kambujans, Peguans, people from Yunnán in China, who had been brought there as captives, and by Chinese and Mussulmans from India, who came for the purposes of trade. Here reigned fifteen kings of one dynasty, successors of and belonging to the family of U-T'ong Rámá-thi-bodi, who, after his death, was honorably designated as Phra Chetha Bida — *i.e.*, 'Royal Elder Brother Father.' This line was interrupted by one interloping usurper between the thirteenth and fourteenth. The last king was Mahíntrá-thi-ràt. During his reign the renowned king of Pegu, named Chamna-dischop, gathered an immense army, consisting of Peguans, Birmese, and inhabitants of northern Siam, and made an attack upon Ayuthia. The ruler of nothern Siam was Mahá-thamma rájá related to the fourteenth king as son-in-law, and to the last as brother-in-law.

"After a siege of three months the Peguans took Ayuthia, but did not destroy it or its inhabitants, the Peguan monarch contenting himself with capturing the king and royal family, to take with him as

* No attempt at uniformity in this respect has been made by the editor of this volume; but, in passages quoted from different authors, the proper names are written and accented according to the various methods of those authors.

trophies to Pegu, and delivered the country over to be governed by Mahá-thamma rájá, as a dependency. The king of Pegu also took back with him the oldest son of Mahá-thamma rájá as a hostage; his name was Phra Náret. This conquest of Ayuthia by the king of Pegu took place A. D. 1556.

"This state of dependence and tribute continued but a few years. The king of Pegu died, and in the confusion incident to the elevation of his son as successor Prince Náret escaped with his family, and, attended by many Peguans of influence, commenced his return to his native land. The new king on hearing of his escape despatched an army to seize and bring him back. They followed him till he had crossed the Si-thong (Birman Sit-thaung) River, where he turned against the Peguan army, shot the commander, who fell from his elephant dead, and then proceeded in safety to Ayuthia.

"War with Pegu followed, and Siam again became independent. On the demise of Mahá-thamma rájá, Prince Náret succeeded to the throne, and became one of the mightiest and most renowned rulers Siam ever had. In his wars with Pegu, he was accompanied by his younger brother, Eká-tassa-rot, who succeeded Náret on the throne, but on account of mental derangement was soon removed, and Phra-Siri Sin Ni-montham was called by the nobles from the priesthood to the throne."

With the accession of this last-mentioned sovereign begins a new dynasty. But before reproducing the chronicles of it we may add a few words concerning that which preceded.

This dynasty had lasted from the founding of Ayuthia, A.D. 1350, until A.D. 1602, a period of two hundred years. Its record shows, on the whole, a remarkable regularity of succession, with perhaps no more intrigues, illegitimacies, murders, and assassinations than are to be found in the records of Christian dynasties. Temples and palaces were built, and among other works a gold image of Buddha is said to have been cast (in the city of Pichai, in the year A.D. 1380), "which weighed fifty-three thousand catties, or one hundred and forty-one thousand pounds, which would represent the almost incredible value (at seventy shillings per ounce) of nearly six millions sterling. The gold for the garments weighed two hundred and eighty-six catties." Another great image of Buddha, in a sitting posture, was cast from gold, silver, and copper, the height of which was fifty cubits.

One curious tradition is on record, the date of which is at the beginning of the fifteenth century. On the death of King Intharaxa, the sixth of the dynasty, his two eldest sons, who were rulers of smaller provinces, hastened, each one from his home, to seize their father's vacant throne. Mounted on elephants they hastened to Ayuthia, and by strange chance arrived at the same moment at a bridge, crossing in opposite directions. The princes were at no loss to understand the motive each of his brother's journey. A contest ensued upon the bridge—a contest so furious and desperate that both fell, killed by each other's hands. One result of this tragedy was to make easy the way of the youngest and surviving

brother, who, coming by an undisputed title to the throne, reigned long and prosperously.

During some of the wars between Pegu and Siam, the hostile kings availed themselves of the services of Portuguese, who had begun, by the middle of the sixteenth century, to settle in considerable numbers in both kingdoms. And there are still extant the narratives of several historians, who describe with characteristic pomposity and extravagance, the magnificence of the military operations in which they bore a part. One of these wars seems to have originated in the jealousy of the king of Pegu, who had learned, to his great disgust, that his neighbor of Siam was the fortunate possessor of no less than seven white elephants, and was prospering mightily in consequence. Accordingly he sent an embassy of five hundred persons to request that two of the seven sacred beasts might be transferred as a mark of honor to himself. After some diplomacy the Siamese king declined—not that he loved his neighbor of Pegu less, but that he loved the elephants more, and that the Peguans were (as they had themselves acknowledged) uninstructed in the management of white elephants, and had on a former occasion almost been the death of two of the animals of which they had been the owners, and had been obliged to send them to Siam to save their lives. The king of Pegu, however, was so far from regarding this excuse as satisfactory that he waged furious and victorious war, and carried off not two but four of the white elephants which had been the *casus belli*. It seems to have been in a campaign about

this time that, when the king of Siam was disabled by the ignominious flight of the war elephant on which he was mounted, his queen, "clad in the royal robes, with manly spirit fights in her husband's stead, until she expires on her elephant from the loss of an arm."

It is related of the illustrious Phra Náret, of whom the royal author, in the passage quoted on a previous page, speaks with so much admiration, that being greatly offended by the perfidious conduct of his neighbor, the king of Cambodia, he bound himself by an oath to wash his feet in the blood of that monarch. "So, immediately on finding himself freed from other enemies, he assailed Cambodia, and besieged the royal city of Lăvĭk, having captured which, he ordered the king to be slain, and his blood having been collected in a golden ewer he washed his feet therein, in the presence of his courtiers, amid the clang of trumpets."

The founder of the second dynasty is famous in Siamese history as the king in whose reign was discovered and consecrated the celebrated footstep of Buddha, Phra Bàt, at the base of a famous mountain to the eastward of Ayuthia. Concerning him the late king, in his historical sketch, remarks:

"He had been very popular as a learned and religious teacher, and commanded the respect of all the public counsellors; but he was not of the royal family. His coronation took place A.D. 1602. There had preceded him a race of nineteen kings, excepting one usurper. The new king submitted all authority in government to a descendant of the former line of

kings, and to him also he intrusted his sons for education, reposing confidence in him as capable of maintaining the royal authority over all the tributary provinces. This officer thus became possessed of the highest dignity and power. His master had been raised to the throne at an advanced age. During the twenty-six years he was on the throne he had three sons, born under the royal canopy—*i.e.*, the great white umbrella, one of the insignia of royalty.

"After the demise of the king, at an extreme old age, the personage whom he had appointed as regent, in full council of the nobles, raised his eldest son, then sixteen years old, to the throne. A short time after, the regent caused the second son to be slain, under the pretext of a rebellion against his elder brother. Those who were envious of the regent excited the king to revenge his brother's death as causeless, and plan the regent's assassination; but he, being seasonably apprised of it, called a council of the nobles and dethroned him after one year's reign, and then raised his youngest brother, the third son, to the throne.

"He was only eleven years old. His extreme youth and fondness for play, rather than politics or government, soon created discontent. Men of office saw that it was exposing their country to contempt, and sought for some one who might fill the place with dignity. The regent was long accustomed to all the duties of the government, and had enjoyed the confidence of their late venerable king; so, with one voice, the child was dethroned and the regent

exalted under the title of Phra Chau Pra Sath-thong. This event occurred A.D. 1630," and forms the commencement of the third dynasty.

"The king was said to have been connected with the former dynasty, both paternally and maternally; but the connection must have been quite remote and obscure. Under the reign of the priest-king he bore the title Raja Suriwong, as indicating a remote connection with the royal family. From him descended a line of ten kings, who reigned at Ayuthia and Lopha-buri—Louvò of French writers. This line was once interrupted by an usurper between the fourth and fifth reigns. This usurper was the foster-father of an unacknowledged though real son of the fourth king, Chau Nárái. During his reign many European merchants established themselves and their trade in the country, among whom was Constantine Phaulkon (Faulkon). He became a great favorite through his skill in business, his suggestions and superintendence of public works after European models, and by his presents of many articles regarded by the people of those days as great curiosities, such as telescopes, etc.

"King Nárái, the most distinguished of all Siamese rulers, before or since, being highly pleased with the services of Constantine, conferred on him the title of Chau Phyá Wicha-yentrá-thé-bodi, under which title there devolved on him the management of the government in all the northern provinces of the country. He suggested to the king the plan of erecting a fort on European principles as a protection to the capital. This was so acceptable a proposal,

that at the king's direction he was authorized to select the location and construct the fort.

"He selected a territory which was then employed as garden-ground, but is now the territory of Bangkok. On the west bank, near the mouth of a canal, now called Báng-luang, he constructed a fort, which bears the name of Wichayeiw Fort to this day. It is close to the residence of his Royal Highness Chaufà-noi Kromma Khun Isaret rangsan. This fort and circumjacent territory was called Thana-buri. A wall was erected, enclosing a space of about one hundred yards square. Another fort was built on the east side of the river, where the walled city of Bangkok now stands. The ancient name Bángkôk was in use when the whole region was a garden.* The above-mentioned fort was erected about the year A.D. 1675.

"This extraordinary European also induced his grateful sovereign King Nárai to repair the old city of Lopha-buri (Louvô), and construct there an extensive royal palace on the principles of European architecture. On the north of this palace Constantine erected an extensive and beautiful collection of buildings for his own residence. Here also he built a Romish church. The ruins of these edifices and their walls are still to be seen, and are said to be a great curiosity. It is moreover stated that he planned the construction of canals, with reservoirs at intervals for bringing water from the mountains on the northeast to the city Lopha-buri, and conveying

* Such names abound now, as Bang-cha, Bang-phra, Bang-plasoi, etc.; *Bang* signifying a small stream or canal, such as is seen in gardens.

it through earthen and copper pipes and siphons, so as to supply the city in the dry season on the same principle as that adopted in Europe. He commenced also a canal, with embankments, to the holy place called Phra-Bat, about twenty-five miles southwest from the city. He made an artificial pond on the summit of Phra-Bat Mountain, and thence, by means of copper tubes and stop-cocks, conveyed abundance of water to the kitchen and bath-rooms of the royal residence at the foot of the mountain. His works were not completed when misfortune overtook him.

"After the demise of Nárái, his unacknowledged son, born of a princess of Yunnan or Chiang-Mai, and intrusted for training to the care of Phya Petcha raja, slew Nárái's son and heir, and constituted his foster-father king, himself acting as prime-minister till the death of his foster-father, fifteen years after; he then assumed the royal state himself. He is ordinarily spoken of as Nai Dua. Two of his sons and two of his grandsons subsequently reigned at Ayuthia. The youngest of these grandsons reigned only a short time, and then surrendered the royal authority to his brother and entered the priesthood. While this brother reigned, in the year 1759, the Birman king, Meng-luang Alaung Barah-gyi, came with an immense army, marching in three divisions on as many distinct routes, and combined at last in the siege of Ayuthia.

"The Siamese king, Chaufa Ekadwat Anurak Moutri, made no resolute effort of resistance. His great officers disagreed in their measures. The in-

habitants of all the smaller towns were indeed called behind the walls of the city, and ordered to defend it to their utmost ability; but jealousy and dissension rendered all their bravery useless. Sallies and skirmishes were frequent, in which the Birmese were generally the victorious party. The siege was continued for two years. The Birmese commander-in-chief, Mahá Nōratha, died, but his principal officers elected another in his place. At the end of the two years the Birmese, favored by the dry season, when the waters were shallow, crossed in safety, battered the walls, broke down the gates, and entered without resistance. The provisions of the Siamese were exhausted, confusion reigned, and the Birmese fired the city and public buildings. The king, badly wounded, escaped with his flying subjects, but soon died alone of his wounds and his sorrows. He was subsequently discovered and buried.

"His brother, who was in the priesthood, and now the most important personage in the country, was captured by the Birmans, to be conveyed in triumph to Birmah. They perceived that the country was too remote from their own to be governed by them; they therefore freely plundered the inhabitants, beating, wounding, and even killing many families, to induce them to disclose treasures which they supposed were hidden by them. By these measures the Birmese officers enriched themselves with most of the wealth of the country. After two or three months spent in plunder they appointed a person of Mon or Peguan origin as ruler over Siam, and withdrew with numerous captives, leaving this Peguan officer to gather

VIEW TAKEN FROM THE CANAL AT AYUTHIA.

fugitives and property to convey to Birmah at some subsequent opportunity. This officer was named Phrá Nái Kong, and made his headquarters about three miles north of the city, at a place called Phō Sam-ton, *i.e.*, 'the three Sacred Fig-trees.' One account relates that the last king mentioned above, when he fled from the city, wounded, was apprehended by a party of travellers and brought into the presence of Phyá Nái Kong in a state of great exhaustion and illness; that he was kindly received and respectfully treated, as though he was still the sovereign, and that Phyá Nái Kong promised to confirm him again as a ruler of Siam, but his strength failed and he died a few days after his apprehension.

"The conquest by Birmah, the destruction of Ayuthia, and appointment of Phyá Nái Kong took place in March, A.D. 1767. This date is unquestionable. The period between the foundation of Ayuthia and its overthrow by the Birmans embraces four hundred and seventeen years, during which there were thirty-three kings of three distinct dynasties, of which the first dynasty had nineteen kings with one usurper; the second had three kings, and the third had nine kings and one usurper.

"When Ayuthia was conquered by the Birmese, in March, 1767, there remained in the country many bands of robbers associated under brave men as their leaders. These parties had continued their depredations since the first appearance of the Birman army, and during about two years had lived by plundering the quiet inhabitants, having no government to fear.

On the return of the Birman troops to their own country, these parties of robbers had various skirmishes with each other during the year 1767.

"The first king established at Bangkok was an extraordinary man, of Chinese origin, named Pin Tat. He was called by the Chinese, Tia Sin Tat, or Tuat. He was born at a village called Bánták, in Northern Siam, in latitude 16° N. The date of his birth was in March, 1734. At the capture of Ayuthia he was thirty-three years old. Previous to that time he had obtained the office of second governor of his own township, Tak, and he next obtained the office of governor of his own town, under the dignified title of Phyá Ták, which name he bears to the present day. During the reign of the last king of Ayuthia, he was promoted to the office and dignity of governor of the city Kam-Cheng-philet, which from times of antiquity was called the capital of the western province of Northern Siam. He obtained this office by bribing the high minister of the king, Chaufá Ekadwat Anurak Moutri; and being a brave warrior he was called to Ayuthia on the arrival of the Birman troops as a member of the council. But when sent to resist the Birman troops, who were harassing the eastern side of the city, perceiving that the Ayuthian government was unable to resist the enemy, he, with his followers, fled to Chantaburi (Chantaboun), a town on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Siam, in latitude 12½° N. and longitude 102° 10′ E. There he united with many brave men, who were robbers and pirates, and subsisted by robbing the villages and merchant-vessels. In this way he be-

came the great military leader of the district and had a force of more than ten thousand men. He soon formed a treaty of peace with the headman of Bángplásoi, a district on the north, and with Kambuja and Annam (or Cochin China) on the southeast."

With the fall of Ayuthia and the disasters inflicted by the Burman army ended the third dynasty in the year 1767. So complete was the victory of the Burmese, and so utter the overthrow of the kingdom of Siam, that it was only after some years of disorder and partial lawlessness that the realm became reorganized under strong centralized authority. The great military leader, to whom the royal chronicle from which we have been quoting refers, seems to have been pre-eminently the man for the hour. By his patient sagacity, joined with bravery and qualities of leadership which are not often found in the annals of Oriental warfare, he succeeded in expelling the Burmese from the capital, and in reconquering the provinces which, during the period of anarchy consequent on the Burmese invasion, had asserted separate sovereignty and independence. The war which about this time broke out between Burmah and China made this task of throwing off the foreign yoke more easy. And his own good sense and judicious admixture of mildness with severity conciliated and settled the disturbed and disorganized provinces. Notably was this the case in the province of Ligor, on the peninsula, where an alliance with the beautiful daughter of the captive king, and presently the birth of a son from the princess, made it easy to

attach the government of that province (and incidentally of the adjoining provinces), by ties of the strongest allegiance to the new dynasty.

Joined with Phyá Ták, in his adventures and successes as his confidential friend and helper, was a man of noble birth and vigorous character, who was, indeed, scarcely the inferior of the great general in ability. This man, closely associated with Phyá Ták, became at last his successor. For, at the close of his career, and after his great work of reconstructing the kingdom was fully accomplished, Phyá Ták became insane. The bonzes (or priests of Buddha), notwithstanding all that he had done to enrich the temples of the new capital (especially in bringing from Laos "the emerald Buddha which is the pride and glory of Bangkok at the present day"), turned against him, declaring that he aspired to the divine honor of Buddha himself. His exactions of money from his rich subjects and his deeds of cruelty and arbitrary power toward all classes became so intolerable, that a revolt took place in the city, and the king fled for safety to a neighboring pagoda and declared himself a member of the priesthood. For a while his refuge in the monastery availed to save his life. But presently his favorite general, either in response to an invitation from the nobles or else prompted by his own ambition, assumed the sovereignty and put his friend and predecessor to a violent death. The accession of the new king (who seems to have shared the dignity and responsibility of government with his brother), was the commencement of the present dynasty, to the history of which a new chapter may

properly be devoted. But before proceeding with the history we interrupt the narrative to give sketches of two European adventurers whose exploits in Siam are among the most romantic and suggestive in her annals.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE STORIES OF TWO ADVENTURERS

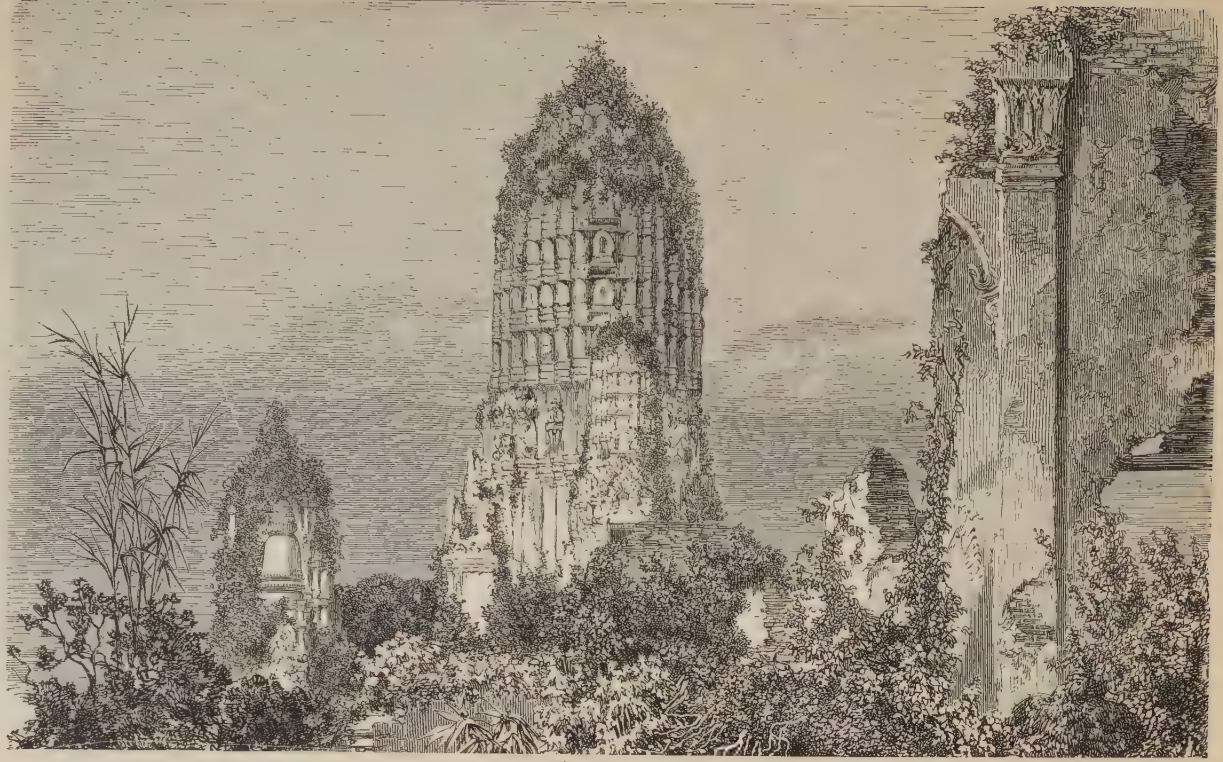
THE sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that golden age of discovery and adventure, did not fail to find in the Indo-Chinese peninsula brilliant opportunities for the exercise of those qualities which made their times so remarkable in the history of the world. Marco Polo, the greatest of Asiatic travellers, dismisses Siam in a few words as a "country called Locac; a country good and rich, with a king of its own. The people are idolaters and have a peculiar language, and pay tribute to nobody, for their country is so situated that no one can enter it to do them ill. Indeed, if it were possible to get at it the Great Kaan [of China] would soon bring them under subjection to him. In this country the brazil which we make use of grows in great plenty; and they also have gold in incredible quantity. They have elephants likewise, and much game. In this kingdom too are gathered all the porcelain shells which are used for small change in all those regions, as I have told you before. There is nothing else to mention except that this is a very wild region, visited by few people; nor does the king desire that any strangers should frequent the country and so find out about his treasures and other resources."

The Venetian's account, though probably obtained from his Chinese sailors, is essentially correct, and applies without much doubt to the region now known as Siam. Sir Henry Yule derives *Locac* either from the Chinese name Lo-hoh, pronounced *Lo-kok* by Polo's Fokien mariners, or from Lawék, which the late King of Siam tells us was an ancient Cambodian city occupying the site of Ayuthia, "whose inhabitants then possessed Southern Siam or Western Cambodia."

Nearly three centuries after Polo, when the far East had become a common hunting-ground for European adventurers, Siam was visited by one of the most extraordinary men of this type who ever told his thrilling tales. The famous Portuguese, Mendez Pinto, passed twenty-one years in various parts of Asia (1537-1558), as merchant, pirate, soldier, sailor, and slave, during which period he was sold sixteen times and shipwrecked five, but happily lived to end his life peacefully in Portugal, where his published "Peregrinacao" earned the fate of Marco Polo's book, and its author was stamped as a liar of the first magnitude. Though mistaken in many of its inferences and details Pinto's account bears surprisingly well the examination of modern critical scholars. When we consider the character of the man and the fact that he must have composed his memoirs entirely from recollection, the wonder really is that he should have erred so little. The value of his story lies in the fact that we get from it, as Professor Vambery suggests, "a picture, however incomplete and defective, of the power and authority of Asia, then still unbroken. In

this picture, so full of instructive details, we perceive more than one thing fully worthy of the attention of the latter-day reader. Above all we see the fact that the traveller from the west, although obliged to endure unspeakable hardships, privation, pain, and danger, at least had not to suffer on account of his nationality and religion, as has been the case in recent times since the all-puissance of Europe has thrown its threatening shadow on the interior of Asia, and the appearance of the European is considered the foreboding of material decay and national downfall. How utterly different it was to travel in mediæval Asia from what it is at present is clearly seen from the fact that in those days missionaries, merchants, and political agents from Europe could, even in time of war, traverse any distances in Asiatic lands without molestation in their personal liberty or property, just as any Asiatic traveller of Moslem or Buddhist persuasion."

Pinto seems to have gone to Siam hoping there to repair his fortunes, which had suffered shipwreck for the fourth time and left him in extreme destitution. Soon after he joined in Odiaa (Ayuthia) the Portuguese colony, which he found to be one hundred and thirty strong, he was induced with his countrymen to serve among the King's body-guards on an expedition made against the rebellious Shan states in the north. The campaign progressed favorably and ended in the subjection of the "King of Chiammay" and his allies, but a scheming queen, desirous of putting her paramour on the throne, poisoned the conqueror upon his return to Odiaa in 1545. "But whereas heaven never leaves wicked actions unpunished, the



RUINS OF A PAGODA AT AYUTHIA.

year after, 1546, and on *January* 15th, they were both slain by *Oyaa Passilico* and the King of *Cambaya* at a certain banquet which these princes made in a temple." The usurpers were thus promptly despatched, but the consequences of their infamy were fateful to Siam, as Pinto informs us at some length.

"The Empire of *Siam* remaining without a lawfull successor, those two great lords of the Kingdom, namely, *Oyaa Passilico*, and the King of *Cambaya*, together with four or five men of the trustiest that were left, and which had been confederated with them, thought fit to chuse for King a certain religious man named *Pretiem*, in regard he was the naturall brother of the deceased prince, husband to that wicked queen of whom I have spoken; whereupon this religious man, who was a *Talagrepo* of a *Pagode*, called *Quiay Mitran*, from whence he had not budged for the space of thirty years, was the day after drawn forth of it by *Oyaa Passilico*, who brought him on *January* 17th, into the city of *Odiaa*, where on the 19th he was crowned King with a new kind of ceremony, and a world of magnificence, which (to avoid prolixity) I will not make mention of here, having formerly treated of such like things. Withall passing by all that further arrived in the Kingdon of *Siam*, I will content myself with reporting such things as I imagine will be most agreeable to the curious. It happened then that the King of *Bramaa* (Burmah), who at that time reigned tyrannically in *Pegu*, being advertised of the deplorable estate whereunto the Empire of *Sornau* (Siam) was reduced, and of the death of the greatest lords of the country, as also that

the new king of this monarchy was a religious man, who had no knowledge either of arms or war, and, withall of a cowardly disposition, a tyrant, and ill beloved of his subjects, he fell to consult thereupon with his lords in the town of *Anapleu*, where at that time he kept his court."

The decision in favor of seizing this favorable opportunity for acquiring his neighbor's territory was practically unanimous, and the tyrant of Pegu accordingly assembled an army of 800,000 men, 100,000 of whom were "strangers," *i.e.*, mercenary troops, and among these we find 1,000 Portuguese, commanded by one Diego Suarez d'Albergaria, nicknamed Galego. So the Portuguese, as we shall see, played important parts on both sides of the great war that followed. After capturing the frontier defences, the Burmans marched across the country through the forests "that were cut down by threescore thousand pioneers, whom the King had sent before to plane the passages and wayes," and sat down before the devoted capital. "During the first five days that the King of *Bramaa* had been before the city of *Odiaa*, he had bestowed labour and pains enough, as well in making of trenches and pallisadoes, as in the providing all things necessary for the siege; in all which time the besieged never offered to stir, whereof *Diego Suarez*, the marshall of the camp, resolved to execute the design for which he came; to which effect, of the most part of the men which he had under his command, he made two separated squadrons, in each of which there were six battalions of six thousand a piece. After this manner he

marched in battell array, at the sound of many instruments, towards the two poynts which the city made on the south side, because the entrance there seemed more facile to him than any other where. So upon the 19th day of *June*, in the year 1548, an hour before day, all these men of war, having set up above a thousand ladders against the walls, endeavoured to mount up on them; but the besieged opposed them so valiently, that in less than half an hour there remained dead on the place above ten thousand on either part. In the mean time the King, who incouraged his souldiers, seeing the ill success of this fight, commanded these to retreat, and then made the wall to be assaulted afresh, making use for that effect of five thousand elephants of war which he had brought thither and divided into twenty troops of two hundred and fifty apiece, upon whom there were twenty thousand *Moens* and *Chaleus*, choice men and that had double pay. The wall was then assaulted by these forces with so terrible an impetuosity as I want words to express it. For whereas all the elephants carried wooden castles on their backs, from whence they shot with muskets, brass culverins, and a great number of harquebuses a crock, each of them ten or twelve spans long, these guns made such an havock of the besieged that in less than a quarter of an hour the most of them were beaten down; the elephants withall setting their trunks to the target fences, which served as battlements, and wherewith they within defended themselves, tore them down in such sort as not one of them remained entire; so that by this means the wall was abandoned of all defence, no man

daring to shew himself above. In this sort was the entry into the city very easy to the assailants, who being invited by so good success to make their profit of so favourable an occasion, set up their ladders again which they had quitted, and mounting up by them to the top of the wall with a world of cries and acclamations, they planted thereon in sign of victory a number of banners and ensigns. Now because the *Turks* (Arabs?) desired to have therein a better share then the rest, they besought the King to do them so much favour as to give them the vantguard, which the King easily granted them, and that by the counsell of *Diego Suarez*, who desired nothing more than to see their number lessened, always gave them the most dangerous imployments. They in the mean time extraordinarily contented, whither more rash or more infortunate than the rest, sliding down by a pane of the wall, descended through a bulwark into a place which was below, with an intent to open a gate and give an entrance unto the King, to the end that they might rightly boast that they all alone had delivered to him the capital city of *Siam;* for he had before promised to give unto whomsoever should deliver up the city unto him, a thousand bisses of gold, which in value are five hundred thousand ducates of our money. These *Turks* being gotten down, as I have said, laboured to break open a gate with two rams which they had brought with them for that purpose; but as they were occupied about it they saw themselves suddenly charged by three thousand *Jaos*, all resolute souldiers, who fell upon them with such fury, as in little more than a quarter of an hour there was not

so much as one *Turk* left alive in the place, wherewith not contented, they mounted up immediately to the top of the wall, and so flesht as they were and covered over with the blood of the *Turks*, they set upon the *Bramaa's* men which they found there, so valiently that most of them were slain and the rest tumbled down over the wall.

"The King of *Bramaa* redoubling his courage would not for all that give over this assault, so as imagining that those elephants alone would be able to give him an entry into the city, he caused them once again to approach unto the wall. At the noise hereof *Oyaa Passilico*, captain general of the city, ran in all haste to this part of the wall, and caused the gate to be opened through which the *Bramaa* pretended to enter, and then sent him word that whereas he was given to understand how his Highness had promised to give a thousand bisses of gold, he had now performed it so that he might enter if he would make good his word and send him the gold, which he stayed there to receive. The King of *Bramaa* having received this jear, would not vouchsafe to give an answer, but instantly commanded the city to be assaulted. The fight began so terrible as it was a dreadfull thing to behold, the rather for that the violence of it lasted above three whole hours, during the which time the gate was twice forced open, and twice the assailants got an entrance into the city, which the King of *Siam* no sooner perceived, and that all was in danger to be lost, but he ran speedily to oppose them with his followers, the best souldiers that were in all the city: whereupon the conflict grew

much hotter than before, and continued half an hour and better, during the which I do not know what passed, nor can say any other thing save that we saw streams of bloud running every where and the air all of a light fire; there was also on either part such a tumult and noise, as one would have said the earth had been tottering; for it was a most dreadful thing to hear the discord and jarring of those barbarous instruments, as bells, drums, and trumpets, intermingled with the noise of the great ordnance and smaller shot, and the dreadful yelling of six thousand elephants, whence ensued so great a terrour that it took from them that heard it both courage and strength. *Diego Suarez* then, seeing their forces quite repulsed out of the city, the most part of the elephants hurt, and the rest so scared with the noise of the great ordnance, as it was impossible to make them return unto the wall, counselled the King to sound a retreat, whereunto the King yielded, though much against his will, because he observed that both he and the most part of the *Portugals* were wounded."

The king's wound took seventeen days to heal, a breathing space which we can imagine both sides accepted with satisfaction. Nothing daunted by the failure of his first onset, he attacked the city again and again during the four months of the siege, employing against it the machines and devices of a Greek engineer in his service, and achieving prodigies of valor. At length, upon the suggestion of his Portuguese captain, he began "with bavins and green turf to erect a kind of platform higher than the walls, and thereon mounted good store of great ord-

nance, wherewith the principal fortifications of the city should be battered." Considering the exhausted state of the defenders it is likely that this elaborate effort would have succeeded, but before the critical moment arrived word came from home that the "*Xemindoo* being risen up in *Pegu* had cut fifteen thousand *Bramaas* there in pieces, and had withal seized on the principal places of the country. At these news the King was so troubled, that without further delay he raised the siege and imbarqued himself on a river called *Pacarau*, where he stayed but that night and the day following, which he imployed in retiring his great ordnance and ammunition. Then having set fire on all the pallisadoes and lodgings of the camp, he parted away on Tuesday the 15th of *October*, 1548, for to go to the town of *Martabano*." So was Ayuthia honorably saved, but Pinto, we fear, followed with his countryman Diego in the Bramaa's train, for he has much to say henceforth of the civil disturbance in Burma and the Xemindoo's final suppression, but of Siam, excepting a brief description of the country, he tells us nothing more.

About a century after Pinto's stay in Siam another adventurer found his way thither while seeking his fortune in the golden Orient and encountered there such vicissitudes of experience as to rival in picturesqueness and wonder the tales of the Arabian Nights. This was the Greek sailor, Constantine Phaulcon, whose story, even when stripped of the extravagant embellishments with which the devout priest, his biographer, has adorned it, is marvellous enough to deserve a place in the annals of travel and

adventure. His strange life has been woven into a romance, "Phaulcon the Adventurer," by William Dalton, but the following sketch of his career, condensed from Sir John Bowring's translation of Père d'Orléans' "Histoire de M. Constance," printed in Tours in 1690, is a better authority for our purpose.

Constantine Phaulcon, or Falcon, born in Cephalonia, was the son of a Venetian nobleman and a Greek lady of rank. Owing to his parents' poverty, however, he left home when a mere boy to shift for himself, and presently drifted into the employ of the English East India Company. After several years passed in this service he accumulated money enough to buy a ship and embark in speculations of his own, but three shipwrecks following in rapid succession brought him at length into a desperate plight of poverty and debt. Being cast in his third misadventure upon the Malabar coast, he there found a fellow sufferer, the sole survivor of a like catastrophe, who proved to be the Siamese ambassador to Persia returning from his mission. Phaulcon was able with the little money saved in his belt to assist the ambassador to Ayuthia, where that officer in gratitude recommended him to the Baraclan (prime-minister) and the king, both of whom were delighted with his ability and determined to make use of him. He was first taken into favor, it is said, from the address with which he supplanted the Moors in the employment, which seemed to have been made over to them, of preparing the splendid entertainments and pageants that were the king's chief pride. Reforms

introduced into this office resulted in the production of much more effective spectacles at a smaller expense to the treasury, for the Moors had indulged in some knavish practices, and when their dishonesty was discovered by the Greek his high place in the sovereign's estimation was fully assured.

At this time his prosperity was interrupted by a severe illness that well-nigh proved fatal to the new favorite, but was turned to good account by Father Antoine Thomas, a Flemish Jesuit, who was passing through Siam on his way to join the Portuguese missions in China and Japan. Thoroughly alive to the importance of securing so powerful a man to the Roman Church, the good father adroitly converted the invalid, and at last had the satisfaction of receiving from Phaulcon abjuration of his errors and heresies and numbering him among the faithful. By the priest's advice, also, "he married, a few days afterward, a young Japanese lady of good family, distinguished not only by rank, but also by the blood of the martyrs from whom she was descended and whose virtues she imitates." It is an interesting episode in the history of Siam that for about a generation near the beginning of the seventeenth century there existed, besides the free intercourse with Western nations, an active exchange of commodities between this part of Cochin China and Japan, many of whose merchants found good employments under Phra Narain, the Siamese king. They proved themselves, however, to be such profound schemers as finally to earn the hatred of the natives, who drove them out in 1632. Soon after this date

Japan adopted a policy of complete exclusion and we hear no more of her subjects in any foreign country.

"If, as a man of talent," continues Père d'Orléans, "Phaulcon knew how to avail himself of the royal favor to establish his own fortune, he used it no less faithfully for the glory of his master and the good of the state; still more, as a true Christian, for the advancement of religion. Up to this time he had aimed chiefly to increase commerce, which occupies the attention of Oriental sovereigns far more than politics, and had succeeded so well that the king of Siam was now one of the richest monarchs in Asia; but he considered that, having enriched, he should now endeavor to render his Sovereign illustrious by making known to foreign nations the noble qualities which distinguished him; and his chief aim being the establishment of Christianity in Siam, he resolved to engage his master to form treaties of friendship with those European monarchs who were most capable of advancing this object."

We must be cautious, however, in accepting all his motives from his Jesuit biographer, who doubtless does him too much honor. According to the Dutch historian Kämpfer, Phaulcon had the fate of all his kind ever before his eyes, and the better to secure himself in his exalted position, "he thought it necessary to secure it by some foreign power, of which he judged the French nation to be the most proper for seconding his designs, which appeared even to aim at the royal dignity. In order to do this he made his sovereign believe that by the assistance of the said

nation he might polish his subjects and put his dominion into a flourishing condition."

Whatever his intentions, it is certain that Phaulcon carried his point, and an embassy was sent to the court of Louis XIV. In return the Chevalier de Chaumont, accompanied by a considerable retinue, and bearing royal gifts and letters, was despatched to Siam, where he arrived in September, 1685, and was splendidly received. Phaulcon was, of course, foremost among the dignitaries; the shipwrecked adventurer, who had risen from the position of common sailor to the post of premier in a rich and thriving realm, found himself receiving on terms of equality and in a style of magnificence that, even to European eyes, seemed admirable, the ambassador of the most illustrious king in Europe. Whether his loyalty to the sovereign whom he was bound to serve was always quite above the suspicion of intrigue with the French is more than doubtful. He greatly desired on his own behalf to effect the conversion of the king to Catholicism, and did what he could to support the arguments of the French envoy to this end. But the king, who was a shrewd man, refused to abandon the religion of his ancestors for that of these designing foreigners.

"Phaulcon had long thought," says the Père d'Orléans, "of bringing to Siam Jesuits who, like those in China, might introduce the Gospel at court through the mathematical sciences, especially astronomy. Six Jesuits having profited by so good an occasion as that of the embassy of the Chevalier de Chaumont to stop in Siam on their way to China, M. Constance upon

seeing them begged that some might be sent to him from France; and for this especial object Father Tachard, one of the six, was requested to return to Europe." This was really the first step in Phaulcon's ruin; for, aware that his master could not in this way encourage the Christians without incurring the hatred of both the Buddhists and Mohammedans in the kingdom, he conceived the plan of begging Louis for some French troops ostensibly to accompany and support the missionaries, but practically to sustain his influence by force, and in the event of defeat to hand the country over to France. Three officers returned with M. de Chaumont and effected a treaty whereby Louis promised to send some troops to the Siamese king, "not only to instruct his own in our discipline, but also to be at his disposal according as he should need them for the security of his person, or for that of his kingdom. In the mean time the king of Siam would appoint the French soldiers to guard two places where they would be commanded by their own officers under the authority of this monarch." The troops and a dozen missionaries set out under Father Tachard's charge in 1686.

But ere they arrived trouble was brewing in Siam. "The Mohammedans," says the historian, "had long flattered themselves with the hope of inducing the king and people of Siam to accept the Koran; but when they saw the monarch thus closely allying himself with Christians, their fears were greatly excited; and the great difference which had been made between the French and Persian ambassadors, in the honors shown them in their audiences with his

majesty, had so much increased the apprehensions of the infidels that they resolved to avert the apprehended misfortune by attempting the life of the king. The authors of this evil design were two princes of Champa and a prince of Macassar, all of them refugees in Siam, where the king had offered them an asylum against some powerful enemies of their own countries. A Malay captain encouraged them by prophecies which he circulated among the zealots of his own sect, of whom he shortly assembled a sufficient number to carry out the conspiracy, had it not been discovered ; which, however, it was"— and promptly suppressed by the minister, to his great credit and honor at court. Phaulcon then was at the pinnacle of his power when the Frenchmen landed, an audience was granted and ratifications exchanged.

"M. Constance had already so high an esteem for our great king [Louis], and the king of Siam, his master, had entered so entirely into his sentiments, that this sovereign, thinking the French troops were not sufficiently near his person, determined to ask from the king, in addition to the troops already landed, a company of two hundred body-guards. As there was much to arrange between the two monarchs for the establishment of religion, not only in Siam, but in many other places where M. Constance hoped to spread it, they resolved that Father Tachard should return to France, accompanied by three mandarins, to present to his majesty the letter from their king; and that he should thence proceed to Rome, to solicit from the Pope assistance in preserving tranquillity and spreading Christianity in the Indies.

"Father Tachard, having received from the king and his minister the necessary orders, left his companions under the direction of M. Constance, and quitted Siam, accompanied by the envoys-extraordinary of the king, at the beginning of the year 1686. He reached Brest in the month of July in the same year.

"Never was negotiation more successful. Occupied as was the king in waging war with the greater part of Europe, leagued against him by the Protestant party, he made no delay in equipping vessels to convey to the king of Siam the guards which he had requested."

It is certainly not surprising that some of the Siamese noblemen should have looked with suspicion on the extraordinary measures which Phaulcon had inaugurated. With a French military force in possession of some of the most important points in the kingdom, and with the Roman Catholic religion securing for itself something like a dominant establishment, it is no wonder that conspiracies against the authors of the new movement should be repeated and ultimately successful. The king had no male heir; and it seemed to a nobleman named Pitraxa that the succession might as well come to him as to the foreigner who had already risen to such a dangerous authority This time the conspiracy was more audaciously and triumphantly carried out. The king, who was beginning to grow old and infirm, was taken sick, and during his illness Pitraxa got possession of the royal seals, and by means of them secured supplies of arms and powder for the further-

ance of his designs. The crisis rapidly approached. Phaulcon determined to arrest the chief conspirator, but was for once outwitted. The French forces which he summoned to his assistance were intercepted and turned back by a false report. Pitraxa made himself master of the palace, of the person of the king, and of all the royal family. It was evident to Phaulcon that the end had come. His resolution was taken accordingly.

"Having with him a few Frenchmen, two Portuguese, and sixteen English soldiers, he called these together, and, with his confessor, entered his chapel that he might prepare for the death which appeared to await him; whence passing into his wife's chamber, he bade her farewell, saying that the king was a prisoner, and that he would die at his feet. He then went out to go direct to the palace, flattering himself that with the small number of Europeans who followed him, he should be able to make his way through the Indians, who endeavored to arrest him, so as to reach the king. He would have succeeded had his followers been as determined as himself; but on entering the first court of the palace, he was suddenly surrounded by a troop of Siamese soldiers. He was putting himself into a defensive attitude when he perceived that he was abandoned by all his suite except the French, so that the contest was too unequal to be long maintained. He was obliged to yield to the force of numbers, and he and the Frenchmen with him were made prisoners and loaded with irons."

It remained for the usurper to rid himself of the

French soldiers, who were still in possession of the two most considerable places in the country. Under a false pretext he won over to himself, temporarily, the commander of the French forces. "Upon this, six French officers who were at court, finding their safety endangered, resolved to leave and retire to Bangkok. They armed themselves, mounted on horseback, and under pretence of a ride, easily escaped from the guard Pitraxa had appointed to accompany them. It is true that, for the one they had got rid of, they found between Louvô and the river troops at different intervals, which, however, they easily passed. On reaching the river they discovered a boat filled with talapoins, which they seized, driving away its occupants. As, however, they did not take the precaution of tying down the rowers, they had the vexation of having them escape under cover of the night, each swimming away from his own side of the boat. Compelled to row it themselves, they soon became so weary that they determined to land, and continue their journey on foot. This was not without its difficulties, as the people, warned by the talapoins whose boat had been seized, and by the fugitive rowers, assembled in troops upon the river-side, uttering loud cries. Notwithstanding this, they leaped out, and gained the plains of Ayuthia, where, most unfortunately, they lost their way. The populace still followed them, and though not venturing to approach very near, never lost sight of them and continued to annoy them as much as possible. They might, after all, have escaped, had not hunger compelled them to enter into a parley for a

supply of provisions. In answer, they were told that they would not be listened to until they had laid down their arms. Then these cowardly wretches, instead of furnishing them with provisions, threw themselves upon them, stripped them, and carried them bound to Ayuthia, whence they were sent back to Louvô most unworthily treated. A troop of three hundred Mohammedans, which Pitraxa on learning their flight sent in pursuit of them, and which met them on their return, treated them so brutally that one named Brecy died from the blows they inflicted. The rest were committed to prison on their arrival at Louvô.

"From this persecution of the French fugitives, the infidels insensibly passed to persecuting all the Christians in Siam, as soon as they learned that M. Desfarges was on the road to join Pitraxa; for from that time the tyrant, giving way to the suspicions infused by crime and ambition, no longer preserved an appearance of moderation toward those he hated. His detestation of the Christians had been for some time kept within bounds by the esteem he still felt for the French; but he had no sooner heard of the deference shown by their general to the orders he had sent him, than, beginning to fear nothing, he spared none.

"As the prison of M. Constance was in the interior of the palace, no one knows the details of his sufferings. Some say, that to make him confess the crimes of which he was accused, they burned the soles of his feet; others that an iron hoop was bound round his temples. It is certain that he was kept in a prison made of stakes, loaded with three heavy

chains, and wanting even the necessaries of life, till Madame Constance, having discovered the place of his imprisonment, obtained permission to furnish him with them.

"She could not long continue to do so, being soon herself in want. The usurper had at first appeared to respect her virtue, and had shown her some degree of favor; he had restored her son, who had been taken from her by the soldiers, and exculpated himself from the robbery. But these courtesies were soon discontinued. The virtues of Madame Constance had for a time softened the ferocity of the tyrant; but the report of her wealth, which he supposed to be enormous, excited his cupidity, which could not in any way be appeased.

"On May 30th, the official seals of her husband were demanded from her; the next day his arms, his papers, and his clothes were carried off; another day boxes were sealed, and the keys taken away; a guard was placed before her dwelling, and a sentinel at the door of her room to keep her in sight. Hitherto nothing had shaken her equanimity; but this last insult so confounded her, that she could not help complaining. 'What,' exclaimed she, weeping, 'what have I done to be treated like a criminal?' This, however, was the only complaint drawn by adversity from this noble Christian lady during the whole course of her trials. Even this emotion of weakness, so pardonable in a woman of two-and-twenty who had hitherto known nothing of misfortune, was quickly repaired; for two Jesuits who happened to be with her on this occasion, having

mildly represented to her that Christians who have their treasure in heaven, and who regard it as their country, should not afflict themselves like pagans for the loss of wealth and freedom—'It is true,' said she, recovering her tranquillity: 'I was wrong, my Fathers. God gave all; He takes all away: may His holy name be praised! I pray only for my husband's deliverance.'

"Scarcely two days had elapsed after the placing of the seals when a mandarin, followed by a hundred men, came to break them by order of his new master, and carried off all the money, furniture and jewels he found in the apartments of this splendid palace. Madame Constance had the firmness herself to conduct him, and to put into his hands all that he wished to take; after which, looking at the Fathers, who still continued with her, 'Now,' said she, calmly, 'God alone remains to us; but none can separate us from Him.'

"The mandarin having retired with his booty, it was supposed she was rid of him, and that nothing more could be demanded from those who had been plundered of all their possessions. The two Jesuits had left to return to their own dwelling, imagining there could be nothing to fear for one who had been stripped of her property, and who, having committed no crime, seemed shielded from every other risk. In the evening it appeared that they were mistaken; for, about six o'clock, the same mandarin, accompanied by his satellites, came to demand her hidden treasures. 'I have nothing hidden,' she answered: 'if you doubt my word, you can look; you are the master here, and everything is open.' So temperate

a reply appeared to irritate the ruffian. 'I will not seek,' said he, 'but, without stirring from the spot, I will compel you to bring me what I ask, or have you scourged to death.' So saying, the wretch gave the signal to the executioners, who came forward with cords to bind, and thick rattans to scourge her. These preparations at first bewildered the poor woman, thus abandoned to the fury of a ferocious brute. She uttered a loud cry, and throwing herself at his feet said, with a look that might have touched the hardest heart, 'Have pity on me!' But this barbarian answered with his accustomed fierceness, that he would have no mercy on her, ordering her to be taken and tied to the door of her room, and having her arms, hands and fingers cruelly beaten. At this sad spectacle, her grandmother, her relatives, her servants, and her son uttered cries which would have moved any one but this hardened wretch. The whole of the unhappy family cast themselves at his feet, and touching the ground with their foreheads, implored mercy, but in vain. He continued to torture her from seven to nine o'clock; and not having been able to gain anything, he carried her off, with all her family, except the grandmother, whose great age and severe illness made it impossible to remove her.

"For some time no one knew what had become of Madame Constance, but at last her position was discovered. A Jesuit father was one day passing by the stables of her palace, when the lady's aunt, who shared her captivity, begged permission of the guards to address the holy man, and ask him for money, promising that they should share it. In this manner

was made known the humiliating condition of this unhappy and illustrious lady, shut up in a stable, where, half dead from the sufferings she had endured, she lay stretched upon a piece of matting, her son at her side. The father daily sent her provisions, which were the only means of subsistence for herself and family, to whom she distributed food with so small a regard for her own wants, that a little rice and dried fish were all that she took for her own share, she having made a vow to abstain from meat for the rest of her life.

"Up to this time, the grand mandarin had not ventured to put an end to the existence of M. Constance, whom the French general had sent to demand, as being under the protection of the king, his master; but now, judging that there was nothing more to fear either from him or from his friends, he resolved to get rid of him. It was on the 5th of June, Whitsun-eve, that he ordered his execution by the Phaja Sojatan, his son, after having, without any form of trial, caused to be read in the palace the sentence of death given by himself against this minister, whom he accused of having leagued with his enemies. This sentence pronounced, the accused was mounted on an elephant, and taken, well guarded, into the forest of Thale-Phutson, as if the tyrant had chosen the horrors of solitude to bury in oblivion an unjust and cruel deed.

"Those who conducted him remarked that during the whole way he appeared perfectly calm, praying earnestly, and often repeating aloud the names of Jesus and of Mary.

"When they reached the place of execution, he was ordered to dismount, and told that he must prepare to die. The approach of death did not alarm him; he saw it near as he had seen it at a distance, and with the same intrepidity. He asked of the Sojatan only a few moments to finish his prayer, which he did kneeling, with so touching an air, that these heathens were moved by it. His petitions concluded, he lifted his hands toward heaven, and protesting his innocence, declared that he died willingly, having the testimony of his conscience that, as a minister, he had acted solely for the glory of the true God, the service of the King, and the welfare of the state; that he forgave his enemies, as he hoped himself to be forgiven by God. 'For the rest, my lord,' said he, turning to the Sojatan, 'were I as guilty as my enemies declare me, my wife and my son are innocent: I commend them to your protection, asking for them neither wealth nor position, but only life and liberty.' Having uttered these few words, he meekly raised his eyes to heaven, showing by his silence that he was ready to receive the fatal blow.

"An executioner advanced, and cut him in two with a back stroke of his sabre, which brought him to the ground, heaving one last, long sigh.

"Thus died, at the age of forty-one, in the very prime of life, this distinguished man, whose sublime genius, political skill, great energy and penetration, warm zeal for religion, and strong attachment to the King, his master, rendered him worthy of a longer life and of a happier destiny.

"Who can describe the grief of Madame Constance at the melancholy news of her husband's death?

"This illustrious descendant of Japanese martyrs was subjected to incredible persecutions, which she endured to the end with heroic constancy and wonderful resignation."

From this edifying narrative, grandiloquent and devout by turns, and written from the Jesuit point of view, it is sufficiently surprising to turn to Kämpfer's brief and prosaic account of the same events. According to him the intrigue and treachery was wholly on the side of Phaulcon, who had planned to place on the throne the king's son-in-law, Moupi-Tatso, a dependent and tool of his own, as soon as the sick king, whose increasing dropsy threatened him with sudden dissolution, should be dead; Pitraxa and his sons, the king's two brothers, as presumptive heirs to the crown, and whoever else was like to oppose the conspirator's designs, were to be despatched out of the way. "Pursuant to this scheme, Moupi's father and relations had already raised one thousand four hundred men, who lay dispersed through the country; and the better to facilitate the execution of this design, Phaulcon persuaded the sick king, having found means to introduce himself into his apartment in private, that it would be very much for the security of his person, during the ill state of his health, to send for the French general and part of his garrison up to Louvô, where the king then was, being a city fifteen leagues north of Ayuthia, and the usual place of the king's residence, where he used to spend the greater part of his time. General des Farges be-

ing on his way thither, the conspiracy was discovered by Pitraxa's own son, who happening to be with two of the king's concubines in an apartment adjoining that where the conspirators were, had the curiosity to listen at the door, and having heard the bloody resolution that had been taken, immediately repaired to his father to inform him of it. Pitraxa without loss of time acquainted the king with this conspiracy, and then sent for Moupi, Phaulcon, and the mandarins of their party, as also for the captain of the guards, to court, and caused the criminals forthwith to be put in irons, nothwithstanding the king expressed the greatest displeasure at his so doing. Phaulcon had for some time absented himself from court, but now being summoned, he could no longer excuse himself, though dreading some ill event: it is said he took leave of his family in a very melancholy manner. Soon after, his silver chair, wherein he was usually carried, came back empty—a bad ọmen to his friends and domestics, who could not but prepare themselves to partake in their master's misfortune. This happened May 19th, in the year 1689. Two days after, Pitraxa ordered, against the king's will, Moupi's head to be struck off, throwing it at Phaulcon's feet, then loaded with irons, with this reproach: 'See, there is your king!' The unfortunate sick king, heartily sorry for the death of his dearest Moupi, earnestly desired that the deceased's body might not be exposed to any further shame, but decently buried, which was accordingly complied with. Moupi's father was seized by stratagem upon his estate between Ayuthia and Louvô, and all their

adherents were dispersed. Phaulcon, after having been tortured and starved for fourteen days, and thereby reduced almost to a skeleton, had at last his irons taken off, and was carried away after sunset in an ordinary chair, unknowing what would be his fate. He was first carried to his house, which he found rifled: his wife lay a prisoner in the stable, who, far from taking leave of him, spit in his face, and would not so much as suffer him to kiss his only remaining son of four years of age, another son being lately dead and still unburied. From thence he was carried out of town to the place of execution, where, notwithstanding all his reluctancy, he had his head cut off. His body was divided into two parts, and covered with a little earth, which the dogs scratched away in the night-time, and devoured the corpse to the bones. Before he died he took his seal, two silver crosses, a relic set in gold which he wore on his breast, being a present from the Pope, as also the order of St. Michael which was sent him by the King of France, and delivered them to a mandarin who stood by, desiring him to give them to his little son—presents, indeed, that could be of no great use to the poor child, who to this day, with his mother, goes begging from door to door, nobody daring to intercede for them." *

It seems to be growing every year more difficult to form positive opinions concerning the various characters with whom history makes us acquainted, and we have here a sufficiently wide choice between two opposite estimates of poor Phaulcon. But whichever

* History of Japan, vol. i., pp. 19–21. London, 1728; quoted in Bowring.

estimate we adopt, it remains abundantly evident that his career is one of the most romantic and extraordinary in the world. Venetian by descent, Greek by birth, English by avocation, Siamese by choice and fortune; at first almost a beggar, a shipwrecked adventurer against whom fate seemed hopelessly adverse, he became the chief actor in a scheme of dominion which might have given to France a realm rivalling in wealth and grandeur the British possessions in India.

Some traces of the public works of which Phaulcon was the founder still remain to show the nature of the internal improvements which he inaugurated. His scheme of foreign alliance was a failure, but that he did much to develop the resources of the kingdom there would seem to be no doubt. "At Lophaburi," says Sir John Bowring, "a city founded about A.D. 600, the palace of Phaulcon still exists; and there are the remains of a Christian church founded by him, in which, some of the traditions say, he was put to death. I brought with me from Bangkok, the capital, one of the columns of the church, richly carved and gilded, as a relic of the first * Christain temple erected in Siam, and as associated with the history of that singular, long-successful and finally sacrificed adventurer. The words *Jesus Hominum Salvator* are still inscribed over the canopy of the altar, upon which the image of Buddha now sits to be worshipped."

* Sir John Bowring was mistaken. It seems to be well enough established that one or two Christian churches were built by the Portuguese, a century before the date of Phaulcon's career.

## CHAPTER V.

### MODERN SIAM

THE present king of Siam is the fourth in succession from that distinguished general who was at first the friend and companion, and at last something like the murderer of the renowned Phya Tak, the founder of the new capital, and indeed of the new kingdom of Siam. For, with the fall of Ayuthia and the removal of the seat of government to Bangkok, the country entered on a new era of prosperity and progress. Bangkok is not far from sixty miles nearer to the mouth of the river than Ayuthia, and the geographical change was significant of an advance toward the other nations of the world and of more intimate relations of commerce and friendship with them. The founder of this dynasty reigned prosperously for twenty-seven years, and under his sway the country enjoyed the repose and peace which after a period of prolonged and devastating war it so greatly needed. After him his son continued the pacific administration of the government for fourteen years, until 1824. At the death of this king (the second of the new dynasty), who left as heirs to the throne two sons of the same mother, the succession was usurped by an illegitimate son, who contrived by cunning management and by a readiness to avail himself of

force, if it was needed, to possess himself of the sovereignty, and to be confirmed in it by the nobles and council of state. The two legitimate sons of the dead king, the oldest of whom had been expressly named to succeed his father, were placed by this usurpation in a position of extreme peril ; and the elder of the two retired at once into a Buddhist monastery as a *talapoin*, where he was safe from molestation and could wait his time to claim his birthright. The younger son, as having less to fear, took public office under the usurper and acquainted himself with the cares and responsibilities of government.

After a reign of twenty-seven years, closing in the year 1851, the usurper died. His reign was marked by some events of extraordinary interest. His royal palace was destroyed by fire, but afterward rebuilt upon a larger scale and in a better style. And various military expeditions against adjoining countries were undertaken with results of more or less importance. The most interesting of these expeditions was that against the Laos country, a brief account of which by an intelligent and able writer is quoted in Bowring's book. As a picture of the style of warfare and the barbarous cruelties of a successful campaign, it is striking and instructive. It is as follows:

"The expedition against Laos was successful. As usual in Siamese warfare, they laid waste the country, plundered the inhabitants, brought them to Bangkok, sold them and gave them away as slaves. The prince Vun Chow and family made their escape into Cochin China ; but instead of meeting with a friendly reception they were seized by the king of that country and

delivered as prisoners to the Siamese. The king (of Laos) arrived in Bangkok about the latter end of 1828, and underwent there the greatest cruelties barbarians could invent. He was confined in a large iron cage, exposed to a burning sun, and obliged to proclaim to every one that the king of Siam was great and merciful, that he himself had committed a great error, and deserved his present punishment. In this cage were placed with the prisoner a large mortar to pound him in, a large boiler to boil him in, a hook to hang him by and a sword to decapitate him; also a sharp pointed spike for him to sit on. His children were sometimes put in along with him. He was a mild, respectable-looking, old, gray-headed man, and did not live long to gratify his tormentors, death having put an end to his sufferings. His body was taken and hung in chains on the bank of the river, about two or three miles below Bangkok. The conditions on which the Cochin Chinese gave up Chow Vun Chow were, that the king of Siam would appoint a new prince to govern the Laos country, who should be approved of by the Cochin Chinese, and that the court of Siam should deliver up the persons belonging to the Siamese army who attacked and killed some Cochin Chinese during the Laos war."

It is safe to say that the kingdom has by this time made such progress in civilization that a picture of barbarism and cruelty like that which is given in the above narrative could not possibly be repeated in Siam to-day.

The reign of this king was noteworthy for the treaty of commerce between Great Britain and Siam,

negotiated by Captain Burney, as also for other negotiations tending to similar and larger intercourse with other countries, especially with the United States. But the concessions granted were ungenerous, and a spirit of jealousy and dislike continued to govern the conduct of Siam toward other nations.

Notwithstanding the slow growth of that enlightened confidence which is the only sure guaranty of commercial prosperity, Siam was brought into connection with the outside world through the labors of the missionaries, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, who, during the reign of this king, established themselves in the country. Some more detailed reference to the labors and successes of the missionaries will be made in a subsequent chapter. It is by means of these self-sacrificing and devoted men that the great advances which Siam has made have been chiefly brought about. The silent influence which they were exerting during this period, from 1824 to 1851, was really the great fact of the reign of the king Phra Chao Pravat Thong. Once or twice the king became suspicious of them, and attempted to hinder or to put an end to their labors. In 1848 he went so far as to issue an edict against the Roman Catholic missionaries, commanding the destruction of all their places of worship; but the edict was only partially carried into execution. The change which has taken place in the attitude of the government in regard to religious liberty, and the sentiments of the present king in regard to it, are best expressed by a royal proclamation issued during the year 1870, a quotation from which is given in the Bangkok Calen-

dar for the next year ensuing, introduced by a brief note from the editor, the Rev. D. B. Bradley.

"The following translation is an extract from the Royal Siamese Calendar for the current year. It is issued by the authority of his majesty, the supreme king, and is to me quite interesting in many respects, but especially in the freedom it accords to all Siamese subjects in the great concerns of their religion. Having near the close of the pamphlet given good moral lessons, the paper concludes with the following noble sentiments, and very remarkable for a heathen king to promulgate:

"In regard to the concern of seeking and holding a religion that shall be a refuge to yourself in this life, it is a good concern and exceedingly appropriate and suitable that you all—every individual of you—should investigate and judge for himself according to his own wisdom. And when you see any religion whatever, or any company of religionists whatever, likely to be of advantage to yourself, a refuge in accord with your own wisdom, hold to that religion with all your heart. Hold it not with a shallow mind, with mere guess-work, or because of its general popularity, or from mere traditional saying that it is the *custom* held from time immemorial; and do not hold a religion that you have not good evidence is true, and then frighten men's fears, and flatter their hopes by it. Do not be frightened and astonished at diverse events (fictitious wonders) and hold to and follow them. When you shall have obtained a refuge, a religious faith that is beautiful and good and suitable, hold to it with great joy, and follow its

teachings, and it will be a cause of prosperity to each one of you."

The contrast between the state of things represented by this document and that exemplified by the story of the treatment of the captive king of Laos is sufficiently striking. The man who tortured the king of Laos was the uncle of the young man who is now on the throne. But between the two—covering the period from the year 1851 to the year 1868—was a king whose character and history entitle him to be ranked among the most extraordinary and admirable rulers of modern times. To this man and his younger brother, who reigned conjointly as first and second kings, is due the honor of giving to their realm an honorable place among the nations of the world and putting it in the van of progress among the kingdoms of the far East.

It seemed at first a misfortune that these two brothers should have been so long kept out of their rightful dignities by their comparatively coarse and cruel half-brother, who usurped the throne. But it proved in the end, both for them and for the world, a great advantage. The usurper, when he seized the throne, promised to hold it for a few years only and to restore it to its rightful heirs as soon as their growth in years and in experience should fit them to govern. So far was he, however, from making good his words that he had made all his arrangements to put his own son in his place. Having held the sovereignty for twenty-seven years the desire to perpetuate it in his own line was natural. And as he had about seven hundred wives there was no lack of

children from among whom he might choose his heir. In 1851 he was taken sick, and it was evident that his end was at hand. At this crisis, says Sir John Bowring :

"The energy of the Praklang (the present Kalahom) saved the nation from the miseries of disputed succession. The Praklang's eldest son, Phya Sisuriwong, held the fortresses of Paknam, and, with the aid of his powerful family, placed Chau Fa Tai upon the throne, and was made Kalahom, being at once advanced ten steps and to the position the most influential in the kingdom, that of prime-minister. On March 18, 1851, the Praklang proposed to the council of nobles the nomination of Chau Fa Tai ; he held bold language, carried his point, and the next day communicated the proceedings to the elected sovereign in his *wat* (or temple), everybody, even rival candidates, having given in their adhesion. By general consent, Chau Fa Noi was raised to the rank of wangna, or second king, having, it is said, one third of the revenues with a separate palace and establishment."

It is difficult to determine how the custom of two kings reigning at once could have originated, and how far back in the history of Siam it is to be traced. It is possible that it originated with the present dynasty, for the founder of this dynasty had a brother with whom he was closely intimate, who shared his fortunes when they were generals together under Phya Tak, and who might naturally enough have become his colleague when he ascended the throne. Under the reign of the uncle of the present

king the office of the second king was abolished. It was restored again at the next succession, but was finally abolished upon the death of King George in 1885.

## CHAPTER VI.

### FIRST IMPRESSIONS

THE entrance into the kingdom of Siam by the great river, which divides the country east and west, brings the traveller at once into all the richness and variety of tropical nature, and is well suited to produce an impression of the singular beauty and the vast resources of the "Land of the White Elephant." For this is the name which may properly be given to the kingdom since the flag of the country has been established. A very curious flag it makes—the white elephant on a red field—and very oddly it must look if ever it is necessary to hoist it upside down as a signal of distress; a signal eloquent indeed, for anything more helpless and distressing than this clumpsy quadruped in that position can hardly be imagined.

The editor of this volume, who visited Siam in one of the vessels of the United States East India Squadron in 1857, and who was present at the exchange of ratifications of the treaty made in the previous year, has elsewhere described * the impressions which were made upon him at his first entrance into the country of the Meinam, and reproduces his own narrative,

* Hours at Home, vol. iv., pp. 464, 531; vol. v., p. 66.

substantially unaltered, in this and the two following chapters.

There is enough to see in Siam, if only it could be described. But nothing is harder than to convey in words the indescribable charm of tropical life and scenery; and it was in this, in great measure, that the enjoyment of my month in Bangkok consisted. Always behind the events which occupied us day by day, and behind the men and things with which we had to do, was the pervading charm of tropical nature—of soft warm sky, with floating fleecy clouds and infinite depths of blue beyond them; of golden sunlight flooding everything by day; and when the day dies its sudden death, of mellow moonlight, as if from a perennial harvest moon; and of stars, that do not glitter with a hard and pointed radiance, as here, but melt through the mild air with glory in which there is never any thought of "twinkling." Always there was the teeming life of land and sea, of jungle and of river; and the varying influence of fruitful nature, captivating every sense with sweet allurement. Read Mr. Tennyson's "Lotos Eaters" if you want to know what the tropics are.

It was drawing toward the middle of a splendid night in May, when I found myself among the "palms and temples" of this singular city. It had been a tiresome journey from the mouth of the river, rowing more than a score of miles against the rapid current; and, if there could be monotony in the wonderful variety and richness of tropical nature, it might have been a monotonous journey. But the wealth of foliage, rising sometimes in the feathery plumes of the

tall areca palm—of all palms the stateliest—or drooping sometimes in heavier and larger masses, crowding to the water's edge in dense, impenetrable jungle, or checked here and there by the toil of cultivation, or cleared for dwellings—was a constant wonder and delight. Now and then we passed a bamboo house, raised high on poles above the ground, and looking like some monstrous bird's nest in the trees; but they were featherless bipeds who peered out from the branches at the passing boats; and not bird's notes but children's voices, that clamored in wonder or were silenced in awe at the white-faced strangers. Sometimes the white walls and shining roofs of temples gleamed through the dark verdure, suggesting the architectural magnificence and beauty which the statelier temples of the city would exhibit. Bald-headed priests, in orange-colored scarfs, came out to watch us. Superb white pelicans stood pensive by the riverside, or snatched at fish, or sailed on snowy wings with quiet majesty across the stream. Or may be some inquiring monkey, gray-whiskered, leading two or three of tenderer years, as if he were their tutor, on a naturalist's expedition through the jungle, stops to look at us with peculiar curiosity, as at some singular and unexpected specimen, but stands ready to dodge behind the roots of mangrove trees in case of danger.

It will be fortunate for the traveller if, while he is rowing up the river, night shall overtake him; for, beside the splendor of the tropic stars above him, there will be rival splendors all about him. The night came down on me with startling suddenness—for "there is

no twilight within the courts of the sun"—just as I was waiting at the mouth of a cross-cut canal, by which, when the tide should rise a little, I might avoid a long bend in the river. By the time the tide had risen the night had fallen thick and dark, and the dense shade of the jungle, through which the canal led us, made it yet thicker and more dark. Great fern leaves, ten or fifteen feet in height, grew dense on either side, and fanlike, almost met over our heads. Above them stretched the forest trees. Among them rose the noise of night-birds, lizards, trumpeter-beetles, and creatures countless and various, making a hoarse din, which, if it was not musical, at least was lively. But the jungle, with its darkness and its din, had such a beauty as I never have seen equalled, when its myriad fire-flies sparkled thick on every side. I had seen fire-flies before, and had heard of them, but I had never seen or heard, nor have I since then ever seen or heard, of anything like these. The peculiarity of them was—not that they were so many, though they were innumerable—not that they were so large, though they were very large—but that they clustered, as by a preconcerted plan, on certain kinds of trees, avoiding carefully all other kinds, and then, as if by signal from some director of the spectacle, they all sent forth their light at once, at simultaneous and exact intervals, so that the whole tree seemed to flash and palpitate with living light. Imagine it. At one instant was blackness of darkness and the croaking jungle. Then suddenly on every side flashed out these fiery trees, the form of each, from topmost twig to outmost bough, set thick with flaming jewels. It was

GENERAL VIEW OF BANGKOK.

easy to imagine at the top of each some big white-waistcoated fire-fly, with the baton of director, ordering the movements of the rest.

This peculiarity of the Siamese fire-flies, or, as our popular term graphically describes them, the tropical "lightning-bugs" was noticed as long ago as the time of old Kämpfer, who speaks concerning them as follows:

"The glow-worms settle on some trees like a fiery cloud, with this surprising circumstance, that a whole swarm of these insects, having taken possession of one tree and spread themselves over its branches, sometimes hide their light all at once, and a moment after make it appear again, with the utmost regularity and exactness, as if they were in perpetual systole and diastole." The lapse of centuries has wrought no change in the rhythmic regularity of this surprising exhibition. Out upon the river once again; the houses on the shore began to be more numerous, and presently began to crowd together in continuous succession; and from some of them the sound of merry laughter and of pleasant music issuing proved that not all the citizens of Bangkok were asleep. The soft light of the cocoanut-oil lamps supplied the place of the illumination of the fire-flies. Boats, large and small, were passing swiftly up and down the stream; now and then the tall masts of some merchant ships loomed indistinctly large through the darkness. I could dimly see high towers of temples and broad roofs of palaces; and I stepped on shore, at last, on the

"Dark shore, just seen that it was rich,"

with a half-bewildered feeling that I was passing through some pleasant dream of the Arabian Nights, from which I should presently awake.

Even when the flooding sunlight of the tropical morning poured in through the windows, it was difficult for me to realize that I was not in some unreal land. There was a sweet, low sound of music filling the air with its clear, liquid tones. And, joining with the music, was the pleasant ringing of a multitude of little bells, ringing I knew not where. It seemed as if the air was full of them. Close by, on one side, was the palace of a prince, and somewhere in his house or in his courtyard there were people playing upon instruments of music, made of smoothed and hollowed bamboo. But no human hands were busy with the bells. Within a stone's throw of my window rose the shining tower of the most splendid temple in Bangkok. From its broad octagonal base to the tip of its splendid spire it must measure, I should think, a good deal more than two hundred feet, and every inch of its irregular surface glitters with ornament. Curiously wrought into it are forms of men and birds, and grotesque beasts that seem, with outstretched hands or claws, to hold it up. Two thirds of the way from the base, stand, I remember, four white elephants, wrought in shining porcelain, facing one each way toward four points of the compass. From the rounded summit rises, like a needle, a sharp spire. This was the temple tower, and all over the magnificent pile, from the tip of the highest needle to the base, from every prominent angle and projection, there were hanging sweet-toned

bells, with little gilded fans attached to their tongues; so swinging that they were vocal in the slightest breeze. Here was where the music came from. Even as I stood and looked I caught the breezes at it. Coming from the unseen distance, rippling the smooth surface of the swift river, where busy oars and carved or gilded prows of many boats were flashing in the sun, sweeping with pleasant whispers through the varied richness of the tropical foliage, stealing the perfume of its blossoms and the odor of its fruits, they caught the shining bells of this great tower, and tossed the music out of them. Was I awake I wondered, or was it some dream of Oriental beauty that would presently vanish?

Something like this Æolian tower there must be in the adjacent kingdom of Birmah, where the graceful pen of Mrs. Judson has put the scene in verse:

"On the pagoda spire
The bells are swinging,
Their little golden circlets in a flutter
With tales the wooing winds have dared to utter;
Till all are ringing,
As if a choir
Of golden-nested birds in heaven were singing;
And with a lulling sound
The music floats around
And drops like balm into the drowsy ear."

The verse breathes the spirit, and gives almost the very sound, of the bewitching tropical scene on which I looked, and out of which "the music of the bells" was blown to me on my first morning in Bangkok.

No doubt my first impressions (which I have given with some detail, and with all the directness of "that right line I") were fortunate. But three or four weeks of Bangkok could not wear them off or counteract them. It is the Venice of the East. Its highway is the river, and canals are its by-ways. There are streets, as in Venice, used by pedestrians; but the travel and the carriage is, for the most part, done by boats. Only, in place of the verdureless margin of the watery streets, which gives to Venice, with all its beauty, a half-dreary aspect, there is greenest foliage shadowing the water, and mingling with the dwellings, and palaces, and temples on the shore; and instead of the funeral gondolas of monotonous color, with solitary *gondoliers*, are boats of every size and variety, paddled sometimes by one, sometimes by a score of oarsmen. Some of the bamboo dwellings of the humbler classes are built, literally, on the river, floating on rafts, a block of them together, or raised on poles above the surface of the water. The shops expose their goods upon the river side, and wait for custom from the thronging boats. The temples and the palaces must stand, of course, on solid ground, but the river is the great Broadway, and houses crowd upon the channel of the boats, and boats bump the houses. It is a picturesque and busy scene on which you look as you pass on amid the throng. Royal boats, with carved and gilded prows, with shouting oarsmen, rush by you, hurrying with the rapid current; or the little skiff of some small pedler, with his assortment of various "notions," paddling and peddling by turns, is dexterously urged

along its way. Amid all this motion and traffic is that charm of silence which makes Venice so dream-like. No rumble of wheels nor clatter of hoofs disturbs you. Only the sound of voices, softened as it comes along the smooth water, or the music of a palace, or the tinkling of the bells of a pagoda, break the stillness. It is a beautiful Broadway, without the Broadway roar and din.

Of course there is not, in this tropical Venice, anything to equal the incomparable architectural beauty of the Adriatic city. And yet it seemed to me that the architecture of Siam was in very perfect accord with all its natural surroundings. In all parts of the city you may find the "wats" or temples. When we started on our first day's sight-seeing, and told the old Portuguese half-breed, who acted as our interpreter, to take us to a "wat," he asked, with a pun of embarrassment, "What wat?" Of course we must begin with the pagoda of innumerable bells, but where to stop we knew not. Temple after temple waited to be seen. Through long, dim corridors, crowded with rows of solemn idols carved and gilded; through spacious open courts paved with large slabs of marble, and filled with graceful spires or shafts or columns; along white walls with gilded eaves and cornices; beneath arches lined with gold, to sacred doors of ebony, or pearly gates of iridescent beauty; amid grotesque stone statues, or queer paintings of the Buddhist *inferno* (strangely similar to the mediæval Christian representations of the same subject), you may wander till you are tired. You may happen to come upon the *bonzes* at their devo-

tions, or you may have the silent temples to yourself. In one of them you will find that clumsy, colossal image, too big to stand, and built recumbent, therefore—a great mass of heavy masonry, covered thick with gilding, and measuring a hundred and fifty feet in length. If you could stand him up, his foot would cover eighteen feet—an elephantine monster. But the roofs, of glazed tiles, with a centre of dark green and with a golden margin, are the greatest charm of the temples. Climb some pagoda and look down upon the city, and, on every side, among the "breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster," you will see the white walls roofed with shining green and gold, and surmounted by their gilded towers and spires. Like the temples are the palaces, but less splendid. But everywhere, whether in temples or palaces, you will find, not rude, barbaric tawdriness of style, but elegance and skill of which the Western nations might be proud. Good taste, and a quick sense of beauty, and the ability to express them in their handiwork, all these are constantly indicated in the architecture of this people. And they make the city one of almost unrivalled picturesqueness to the traveller, who glides from river to canal and from canal to river, under the shadow of the temple towers, and among the shining walls of stately palaces.

Where so much wealth is lavished on the public buildings there must be great resources to draw from; and, indeed, the mineral wealth of the country appears at almost every turn. Precious stones and the precious metals seem as frequent as the fire-

flies in the jungle. Sometimes, as in the silver currency, there is an absence of all workmanship; the coinage being little lumps of silver, rudely rolled together in a mass and stamped. But sometimes, as in the teapots, betel-nut boxes, cigar-holders, with which the noblemen are provided when they go abroad, you will see workmanship of no mean skill. Often these vessels are elegantly wrought. Sometimes they are studded with jewels, sometimes they are beautifully enamelled in divers colors. Once I called upon a noble, who brought out a large assortment of uncut stones—some of them of great value—and passed them to me as one would a snuff-box, not content till I had helped myself. More than once I have seen children of the nobles with no covering at all, except the strings of jewelled gold that hung, in barbarous opulence, upon their necks and shoulders; but there was wealth enough in these to fit the little fellows with a very large assortment of most fashionable and Christian apparel, even at the ruinous rate of tailors' prices at the present day. To go about among these urchins, and among the houses of the nobles and the king's palaces, gives one the half-bewildered and half-covetous feeling that it gives to be conducted by polite but scrutinizing attendants through a mint. Surely we had come at last to

> "Where the gorgeous East, with richest hand,
> Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold."

Of course, of all this wealth the king's share was the lion's share.

Then, as for vegetable wealth, I do not know that

there is anywhere a richer valley in the world than the valley of the Meinam. All the productions of the teeming tropics may grow luxuriantly here. There was rice enough in Siam the year before my visit to feed the native population and to supply the failure of the rice crop in Southern China, preventing thus the havoc of a famine in that crowded empire, and making fortunes for the merchants who were prompt enough to carry it from Bangkok to Canton. Cotton grows freely beneath that burning sky. Sugar, pepper, and all spices may be had with easy cultivation. There is gutta-percha in the forests. There are dye-stuffs and medicines in the jungles. The painter gets his gamboge, as its name implies, from Cambodia, which is tributary to their majesties of Bangkok. As for the fruits, I cannot number them nor describe them. The mangostene, most delicate and most rare of them all, grows only in Siam, and in the lands adjacent to the Straits of Sunda and Malacca. Some things we may have which Siam cannot have, but the mangostene is her peculiar glory, and she will not lend it. Beautiful to sight, smell, and taste, it hangs among its glossy leaves, the prince of fruits. Cut through the shaded green and purple of the rind, and lift the upper half as if it were the cover of a dish, and the pulp of half transparent, creamy whiteness stands in segments like an orange, but rimmed with darkest crimson where the rind was cut. It looks too beautiful to eat; but how the rarest, sweetest essence of the tropics seems to dwell in it as it melts to your delighted taste!

This is the Land of the White Elephant, so singular, so rich, so beautiful; but we need also to tell what manner of men the people are who live beneath the standard of the elephant, or what kings and nobles govern them.

## CHAPTER VII.

### A ROYAL GENTLEMAN

SOON after arriving in Bangkok, in 1857, on the occasion referred to in the last chapter, the present editor was invited to an interview with the second king. The account of that interview was written while it was still a matter of recent memory; and it seems better to reproduce the story, for the sake of the freshness with which the incidents described in it were recorded, rather than to attempt the rewriting of it. It is a characteristic picture of an extraordinary man, and of the manners and customs which still prevail for the most part (with some important exceptions) at the court of Siam. This king was the grandson of the founder of the present dynasty, and was the junior of the two princes who, by the usurpation of their half-brother, were, for twenty-seven years, kept out of their birthright. Even so long ago as 1837, an intelligent traveller who visited Siam said concerning him: "No man in the kingdom is so qualified to govern well. His naturally fine mind is enlarged and improved by intercourse with foreigners, by the perusal of English works, by studying Euclid and Newton, by freeing himself from a bigoted attachment to Buddhism, by candidly recognizing our superiority and a readiness

to adopt our arts. He understands the use of the sextant and chronometer, and was anxious for the latest Nautical Almanac, which I promised to send him. His little daughters, accustomed to the sight of foreigners, so far from showing any signs of fear, always came to sit upon my lap, though the yellow cosmetic on their limbs was sure to be transferred in part to my dress. One of them took pride in repeating to me a few words of English, and the other took care to display her power of projecting the elbow forward,"—an accomplishment upon which the ladies of Siam still pride themselves, and in which they are extraordinarily expert.

This was in 1837. How greatly the character of the second king had developed since that time will appear from the editor's description, which refers, as has been said, to the year 1857.

One king at a time is commonly thought to be as much as any kingdom has need of. Indeed, there seems to be a growing tendency among the nations of the earth to think that even one is one too many, and the popular prejudice is setting very strongly in favor of none at all. Nevertheless, there are in Siam (or rather, until very recently, there were) two kings reigning together, each with the full rank and title of king, and with no rivalry between them. It is probable that, originally, a monarchy was the normal condition of the government, and that the duarchy is of comparatively modern origin. But it is certain that when I was in the Land of the White Elephant there was a kind of Siamese-twin arrange-

ment in the kingdom. The two kings were brothers, and though, as has been said, their rank and title were equal, the real power and work of government rested on the shoulders of the elder of the two, the other keeping discreetly and contentedly in the background. Both were men of noteworthy ability, and deserve to be known and honored for their personal attainments in civilization, and for what they have done to lift their kingdom out of degradation and barbarism, and to welcome and promote intercourse between it and the Western nations. When we remember the obstinacy of Oriental prejudice against innovation, and the persistency with which the people wrap themselves in their conceit as in a garment, we shall the better appreciate the state of things at the court of the White Elephant, which I am about to describe.

The second king was a man of social disposition, and fond of the company of strangers. It was, doubtless, owing to this fact that when he heard that there was an American man-of-war at the mouth of the river, and that an officer had been sent up to Bangkok to report her arrival, he sent a messenger and a boat with the request that I would come and see him. It did not take long for the score of oarsmen, with the short, quick motion of their paddles, and the grunting energy with which they plied them, to bring the boat up to the palace gates. For, of course, the palace has a water-front, and one may pass at one step from among the thronging boats of the river into the quiet seclusion of the king's inclosure. Passing through a lofty gateway at the

water's edge, we came to a large and stately temple, about which were priests in orange-colored drapery trying to screen their shining skulls from the fierce heat of the morning sun by means of fans. I used to feel sorry for the priests. Ecclesiastical law and usage compel them to shave every sign of hair from their heads. Not even a tail is left to them, but they are as bald as beetles. And when (as in Siam) the sun's rays beat with almost perpendicular directness, it is no trifling thing to be deprived of even the natural protection with which the skull is provided. Whatever can be done with fans toward shielding themselves they do; and, also, they can, by the same means, shut off their eyes from beholding vanity, so that a fan is a most important part of the sacerdotal outfit. Leaving the priests to group themselves in idle picturesqueness near the royal temple, we pass on by storehouses and treasuries and stables of the royal elephants, between sentries standing guard with European arms and in a semi-European uniform, to the armory, where I was to wait until the king was ready.

The messenger who had hitherto conducted me was known among the foreign residents of Bangkok as "Captain Dick"—a talkative person, with a shrewd eye to his own advancement. He spoke good English, and a good deal of it, and suggested, I remember, certain ways in which it would be possible for me to further his interests with the king. He had been at sea, and had perhaps commanded one of the king's sea-going vessels—his "captaincy" being rather maritime than military. He was quite dis-

posed to join the embassy, which was at that time getting ready to be sent to Great Britain. He mentioned, incidentally, that a few of the naval buttons on my uniform would be a highly acceptable gift for me to offer him. The confidence and self-assurance with which he had borne himself, however, began perceptibly to wilt as we drew a little nearer to the august presence of royalty. And, at the armory, he made me over, in quite an humble manner, to the king's oldest son, who was to take me to his father. As I shook hands with the tall, manly, handsome youth who was waiting for me, I thought him worthy of his princely station. Kings' sons are not always the heirs of kingly beauty or of kingly virtues; but here was one who had, at least, the physical endowments which should fit him for the dignity to which he was born. He was almost the only man I saw in Siam whose teeth were not blackened nor his mouth distorted by the chewing of the betel-nut. For the betel-nut is in Siam what the tobacco-cud is in America, only it is not, I believe, quite so injurious to the chewer as the tobacco; while, on the other hand, its use is a little more universal. As between the two, for general offensiveness, I do not know that there is anything to choose.

The second king, seeking a significant name for his son, chose one which had been borne, not by an Asiatic, not by an European, but by the greatest of Americans—George Washington. "What's in a name?" It may provoke a smile at first, that such a use should be made of the name of Washington, as if it were the whim of an ignorant and half-savage

king. But when it shall appear, as I shall make it appear before I have finished, that the Siamese king understood and appreciated the character of the great man after whom he wished his son to be called, I think that no American will be content with laughing at him. I own that it moved me with something more than merely patriotic pride to hear the name of Washington honored in the remotest corner of the old world. It seemed to me significant of great progress already achieved toward Christian civilization, and prophetic of yet greater things to come.

But as the Prince George Washington walked on with me, and I revolved these great things in my mind, another turn was given to my thoughts. For when we had gone through a pleasant, shady court, and had come to the top of a flight of marble steps which took us to the door of the king's house (a plain and pleasant edifice of mason-work, like the residence of some private gentleman of wealth in our own country), I suddenly missed the young man from my side, and turned to look for him. What change had come over him! The man had been transformed into a reptile. The tall and graceful youth, princely in look and bearing, was down on all his marrow-bones, bending his head until it almost touched the pavement of the portico, and, crawling slowly toward the door, conducted me with reverent signs and whispers toward the king, his father, whom I saw coming to meet us.

This was the other side of the picture. And I draw out the incident in detail because it is characteristic of the strange conflict between the old barbarism

and the new enlightenment which meets one at every turn in the Land of the White Elephant. There are two tides—one is going out, the ebb-tide of ignorance, of darkness, of despotic power; and one is coming in—the flood-tide of knowledge and liberty and all Christian grace. And, as in the whirl of waters where two currents meet, one never knows which way his boat may head, so sometimes the drift of things is backward toward the Orient, and sometimes forward, westward, as the "star of empire" moves. Each rank has, or until quite recently had, some who crawl like crocodiles beneath it, and is in its turn compelled to crawl before the higher. Nor are the members of a nobleman's family exempt. I was introduced once to one of the wives of a fat, good-natured prince (a half-brother of the two kings), who was crawling around, with her head downward, on the floor. I offered my hand as politely as was possible, and she shuffled up to shake it, and then shuffled off again into a corner. It was very queer—more so than when I shake hands with Trip, the spaniel, for then we both of us understand that it is a joke—but here it was a solemn and ceremonious act of politeness, and had to be performed with a straight face. The good lady has her revenge, however, and must enjoy it, when she sees her fat husband, clumsy, and almost as heavy as an elephant, get down on his hands and knees, as he has to, in the presence of his majesty the king. I have been told that, when the Siamese embassy to Great Britain was presented to the queen, before anybody knew what they were about, the ambassadors were down on

all fours, at the entrance of the audience chamber, and insisted on crawling like mud-turtles into her majesty's presence. For, consistently enough, the court of Siam requires of foreigners only what etiquette requires in the presence of the king or president of their own country—but when its representatives are sent to foreign courts they carry their own usage with them. I felt a pardonable pride, and a little kindling of the "*Civis-Romanus-sum*" spirit, and an appreciable stiffening of the spinal column as I walked straight forward, while Prince George Washington crawled beside me. Blessed was the man who walked uprightly.

Halleck, the sprightliest poet of his native State, in verse which will be always dear to all who love that good old commonwealth, has told us how a true son of Connecticut

> "Would shake hands with a king upon his throne
> And think it kindness to his majesty."

Of course, then, as the king came toward the portico and met us at the door, that was the thing to do, being also the etiquette at the court of James Buchanan, who then reigned at Washington. But not even that venerable functionary, whose manners I have been given to understand were one of his strong points, could have welcomed a guest with more gentlemanly politeness than that with which this king of a barbarous people welcomed me. He spoke good English, and spoke it fluently, and knew how, with gentlemanly tact, to put his visitor straightway at his ease. It was hard to believe that I was in a re-

mote and almost unknown corner of the old world, and not in the new. The conversation was such as might take place between two gentlemen in a New York parlor. On every side were evidences of an intelligent and cultivated taste. The room in which we sat was decorated with engravings, maps, busts, statuettes. The book-cases were filled with well-selected volumes, handsomely bound. There were, I remember, various encyclopædias and scientific works. There was the Abbottsford edition of the Waverly novels, and a bust of the great Sir Walter overhead. There were some religious works, the gift, probably, of the American missionaries. And, as if his majesty had seen the advertisements in the newspapers which implore a discriminating public to "get the best," there were two copies of Webster's quarto dictionary, unabridged. Moreover, the king called my particular attention to these two volumes, and, as if to settle the war of the dictionaries by an authoritative opinion, said: "I like it very much; I think it the best dictionary, better than any English." Accordingly the publishers are hereby authorized to insert the recommendation of the second king of Siam, with the complimentary notices of other distinguished critics, in their published advertisements. On the table lay a recent copy of the London *Illustrated News*, to which the king is a regular subscriber, and of which he is an interested reader. There was in it, I remember, a description, with diagrams, of some new invention of fire-arms, concerning which he wished my opinion, but he knew much more about it than I did. Some reference was made

to my native city, and I rose to show on the map, which hung before me, where it was situated, but I found that he knew it very well, and especially that "they made plenty of guns there." For guns and military affairs he had a great liking, and indeed for all sorts of science. He was expert in the use of quadrant and sextant, and could take a lunar observation and work it out with accuracy. He had his army, distinct from the first king's soldiers, disciplined and drilled according to European tactics. Their orders were given in English and were obeyed with great alacrity. He had a band of Siamese musicians who performed on European instruments, though I am bound to say that their performance was characterized by force rather than by harmony. He made them play "Yankee Doodle," and "Hail Columbia," but if I enjoyed it, it was rather with a patriotic than with a musical enthusiasm. When they played their own rude music it was vastly better. But the imperfections of the band were of very small importance compared with the good will which had prompted the king to make them learn the American national airs. That good will expressed itself in various ways. His majesty, who wrote an elegant autograph, kept up a correspondence with the captain of our ship for a long time after our visit. And when the captain, a few years later, had risen to the rank of Admiral, and had made the name of Foote illustrious in his country's annals, the king wrote to him, expressing his deep interest in the progress of our conflict with rebellion, and his sincere desire for the success of our national cause.

When kings and peoples, bound to us by the ties of language and kindred and religion, misunderstood us, and gave words of sneering censure, or else no words at all, as we were fighting with the dragon, this king of an Asiatic people, of different speech, of different race, of different religion, found words of intelligent and appreciative cheer for us. He had observed the course of our history, the growth of our nation, the principles of our government. And though we knew very little about him and his people, he was thoroughly informed concerning us. So that, as I talked with him, and saw the refinement and good taste which displayed itself in his manners and in his dwelling, and the minute knowledge of affairs which his conversation showed, I began to wonder on what subjects I should find him ignorant. Once or twice I involuntarily expressed my amazement, and provoked a good-natured laugh from the king, who seemed quite to understand it.

And yet this gentlemanly and well-informed man was black. And he wore no trousers—the mention of which fact reminds me that I have not told what he did wear. First of all, he wore very little hair on his head, conforming in this respect to the universal fashion among his countrymen, and shaving all but a narrow ridge of hair between the crown and the forehead; and this is cut off at the height of an inch, so that it stands straight up, looking for all the world like a stiff blacking-brush, only it can never be needed for such a purpose, because no Siamese wears shoes. I think the first king, when we called upon him, had on a pair of slippers, but the second king,

if I remember, was barefooted—certainly he was barelegged. Wound about his waist and hanging to his knees was a scarf of rich, heavy silk, which one garment is the entire costume of ordinary life in Siam. The common people, of course, must have it of cheap cotton, but the nobles wear silk of beautiful quality and pattern, and when this is wound around the waist so that the folds hang to the knees, and the ends are thrown over the shoulders, they are dressed. On state occasions something is added to this costume, and on all occasions there will be likely to be a wonderful display of jewels and of gold. So now, the light would flash once in a while from the superb diamond finger-rings which the king whom I am describing wore. He wore above his scarf a loose sack of dark-blue cloth, fastened with a few gold buttons, with a single band of gold-lace on the sleeves, and an inch or two of gold-lace on the collar. Half European, half Oriental in his dress, he had combined the two styles with more of good taste than one could have expected. It was characteristic of that transition from barbarism to civilization upon which his kingdom is just entering.

The same process of transition and the same contrast between the two points of the transition was expressed in other ways. If it be true, for example, that cookery is a good index of civilization, there came in presently most civilized cakes and tea and coffee, as nicely made as if, by some mysterious dumb-waiter they had come down fresh from the restaurants of Paris. The king made the tea and coffee with his own hand, and with the conventional

inquiry, "Cream and sugar?"—and the refreshments were served in handsome dishes of solid silver. Besides, I might have smoked a pipe, quite wonderful by reason of the richness of its ornament, or drunk his majesty's health in choice wines of his own importation. The refreshment which was furnished was elegant and ample, and, if taken as an index of civilization, indicated that the court of the White Elephant need not be ashamed, even by the side of some that made much higher claims. But, on the other hand, while the lunch was going on, Prince George Washington and a great tawny dog who answered to the name of "Watch," lay prostrate with obsequious reverence on the floor, receiving with great respect and gratitude any word that the king might deign to fling to them. One or two noblemen were also present in the same attitude. Presently there came into the room one of the king's little children, a beautiful boy of three or four years old, who dropped on his knees and lifted his joined hands in reverence toward his father. It was quite the attitude that one sees in some of the pictures of "little Samuel,"—as if the king were more than man. After the child—whose sole costume consisted of a string or two of gold beads, jewelled, and perhaps a pair of bracelets—crawled his mother, who joined the group of prostrate subjects. The little boy, by reason of his tender age, was allowed more liberty than the others, and moved about almost as unembarrassed as the big dog "Watch;" but when he grows older he will humble himself like the others. To see men and women degraded literally to a level with the beasts

that perish was all the more strange and sad by contrast with the civilization which was shown in the conversation and manners of the king, and in all the furniture of his palace. I half expected to see the portrait of the real George Washington on the wall blush with shame and indignation as it looked down on the reptile attitude of his namesake; and I felt a sensation of relief when, at last, it became time for me to leave, and the young prince, crawling after me until we reached the steps, was once more on his legs.

But it seemed to me then, and a subsequent interview with the king confirmed the feeling, that I had been in one of the most remarkable palaces, and with one of the most remarkable men, in the world. Twice afterward I saw him; once when our captain and a detachment of the officers of the ship waited upon him by his invitation, and spent a most agreeable evening, socially, enlivened with music by the band, and broadsword and musket exercise by a squad of troops, and refreshed by a handsome supper in the dining-room of the palace, on the walls of which hung engravings of all the American Presidents from Washington down to Jackson. I do not know who enjoyed the evening most; the king, to whom the companionship of educated foreigners was a luxury which he could not always command, or we, to whom the strange spectacle which I have been trying to describe was one at which the more we gazed the more "the wonder grew." Indeed, we felt so pleasantly at home that when we said good-by, and left the pleasant, comfortable, home-like rooms

in which we had been sitting, the piano and the musical boxes, the cheery hospitality of our good-natured host, and dropped down the river to the narrow quarters of our ship, it was with something of the sadness which attends the parting from one's native land, when the loved faces on the shore grow dim and disappear, and the swelling canvas overhead fills and stiffens with the seaward wind.

We had an opportunity of repaying something of the king's politeness, for, in response to an invitation of the captain, he did what no king had ever done before—came down the river and spent an hour or two on board our ship (the U. S. sloop-of-war Portsmouth, Captain A. H. Foote commanding), and was received with royal honors, even to the manning of the yards. We made him heartily welcome, and the captain gave the handsomest dinner which the skill of Johnson, his experienced steward, could prepare—that venerable colored person recognizing the importance of the occasion, and aware that he might never again be called upon to get a dinner for a king. The captain did not fail to ask a blessing as they drew about the table, taking pains to explain to his guest the sacred significance of that Christian act—for it was at such a time as this, especially, that the good admiral was wont to show the colors of the "King Eternal" whom he served. The royal party carefully inspected the whole ship, with shrewd and intelligent curiosity, and before they left we hoisted the white elephant at the fore, and our big guns roared forth the king's salute. Nor was one visit enough, but the next day he came again, retiring for the night to the

little steamer on which he had made the journey down the river from Bangkok. It was a little fussy thing, just big enough to hold its machinery and to carry its paddle-wheels, but was dignified with the imposing name of "Royal Seat or Siamese Steam Force." It was made in the United States, and put together by one of the American missionaries in Bangkok. It was then the only steamer in the Siamese waters, but it proved to be the pioneer of many others that have made the Meinam River lively with the stir of an increasing commerce.

At the death of the second king, in 1866, his elder brother issued a royal document containing a biographical sketch and an estimate of his character. It is written in the peculiar style, pedantic and conceited, by which the first king's literary efforts are distinguished, but an extract from it deserves on all accounts to be quoted. These two brothers, both of extraordinary talents, and, on the whole, of illustrious character and history, lived for the most part on terms of fraternal attachment and kindness, although some natural jealousy would seem to have grown up during the last few years of their lives, leading to the temporary retirement of the second king to a country-seat near Chieng Mai, in the hill-country of the Upper Meinam. Here he spent much of his time during his last years, and here he added to his harem a new wife, to whom he was tenderly attached. He returned to Bangkok to die, and was sincerely honored and lamented, not only by his own people, to whom he had been a wise and faithful friend and ruler, but also by many of other lands, to whom the

fame of his high character had become known. His brother's "general order" announcing his decease, contains the following paragraph:

"He made everything new and beautiful and of curious appearance, and of a good style of architecture and much stronger than they had formerly been constructed by his three predecessors, the second kings of the last three reigns, for the space of time that he was second king. He had introduced and collected many and many things, being articles of great curiosity, and things useful for various purposes of military arts and affairs, from Europe and America, China and other states, and planted them in various departments and rooms or buildings suitable for these articles, and placed officers for maintaining and preserving the various things neatly and carefully. He has constructed several buildings in European fashion and Chinese fashion, and ornamented them with various useful ornaments for his pleasure, and has constructed two steamers in manner of men-of-war, and two steam-yachts and several rowing state-boats in Siamese and Cochin-China fashion, for his pleasure at sea and rivers of Siam; and caused several articles of gold and silver, being vessels and various wares and weapons, to be made up by the Siamese and Malayan goldsmiths, for employ and dress for himself and his family, by his direction and skilful contrivance and ability. He became celebrated and spread out more and more to various regions of the Siamese kingdom, adjacent states around, and far famed to foreign countries even at far distance, as he became acquainted with many and many foreigners,

who came from various quarters of the world where his name became known to most as a very clever and bravest prince of Siam."

Much more of this royal document is quoted in Mrs. Leonowens' "English Governess at the Court of Siam."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### PHRABAT SOMDETCH PHRA PARAMENDR MAHA MONGKUT

IN some respects the most conspicuous name in the history of the civilization of Siam will always be that of the king under whose enlightened and liberal administration of government the kingdom was thrown open to foreign intercourse, and the commerce, the science, and even the religion of the western world accepted if not invited. His son, the present first king, is following in the steps of his father, and has already introduced some noteworthy reforms and changes, the importance of which is very great. But the way was opened for these changes by the wise and bold policy of the late king, whose death, in 1868, closed a career of usefulness which entitles him to a high place among the benefactors of his age.

A description of this king and of his court is furnished from the same editorial narrative from which the last two chapters have been chiefly quoted. It will be remembered that the period to which the narrative refers is the year 1857, the time of the visit of the Portsmouth, with the ratification of the American treaty.

His majesty, the first king of Siam, kindly gives us our choice of titles by which, and of languages in

THE LATE FIRST KING AND QUEEN.

which, he may be designated. To his own people he appears in an array of syllables sufficiently astonishing to our eyes and ears, as Phrabat Somdetch Phra Paramendr Maha Mongkut Phra Chau Klau Chau Yu Hud; but to outsiders he announces himself as simply the first king of Siam and its dependencies; or, in treaties and other official documents, as "Rex Major," or "Supremus Rex Siamensium." The Latin is his, not mine. And I am bound to acknowledge that the absolute supremacy which the "supremus" indicates is qualified by his recognition of the "blessing of highest and greatest superagency of the universe," by which blessing his own sovereignty exists. He has been quick to learn the maxim which monarchs are not ever slow to learn nor slow to use, that "Kings reign by the grace of God." And it is, to say the least, a safe conjecture that the maxim has as much power over his conscience as it has had over the consciences of some kings much more civilized and orthodox than he.

This polyglot variety of titles indicates a varied, though somewhat superficial, learning. Before he came to the throne the king had lived for several years in the seclusion of a Buddhist monastery. Promotion from the priesthood to the throne is an event so unusual in any country except Siam, that it might seem full of risk. But in this instance it worked well. During the years of his monastic life he grew to be a thoughtful, studious man, and he brought with him to his kingly office a wide familiarity with literature which marked him as a scholar who knew the world through books rather than through men. His manner

of speaking English was less easy and accurate than his brother's; but, on the other hand, the "pomp and circumstance" of his court was statelier and stranger, and is worthy of a better description. The second king received us with such gentlemanly urbanity and freedom that it was hard to realize the fact that we were in the presence of royalty. But our reception by the first king was arranged on what the newspapers would call "a scale of Oriental magnificence," and it lingers in memory like some dreamy recollection of the splendors of the Arabian Nights.

One of the most singular illustrations of the ups and downs of nations and of races which history affords, is to be seen in the position of the Portuguese in Siam. They came there centuries ago as a superior race, in all the dignity and pride of discoverers, and with all the romantic daring of adventurous exploration. Now there is only a worn-out remnant of them left, degraded almost to the level of the Asiatics, to whom they brought the name and knowledge of the Western world. They have mixed with the Siamese, till, at the first, it is difficult to distinguish them as having European blood and lineage. But when we asked who the grotesque old creatures might be who came to us on messages from the king, or guided us when we went to see the wonders of the city, or superintended the cooking of our meals, or performed various menial services about our dwelling, we found that they were half-breed descendants of the Portuguese who once flourished here. When we landed at the mouth of the river on our way to Bangkok for an audience with the king, one of the first

persons whom we encountered was one of these demoralized Europeans. He made a ridiculous assertion of his lineage in the style of his costume. Disdaining the Siamese fashions, he had made for himself or had inherited a swallow-tailed coat of sky-blue silk, and pantaloons of purple silk, in which he seemed to feel himself the equal of any of us. Had any doubt as to his ancestry lingered in our minds, it must have been removed by a most ancient and honorable stove-pipe hat, which had evidently been handed down from father to son, through the generations, as a rusty relic of grander days. This old gentleman was in charge of a bountiful supply of provisions which the king had sent for us. It was hard not to moralize over the old man as the representative of a nation which had all the time been going backward since it led the van of discovery in the Indies centuries ago; while the people whom his ancestors found heathenish and benighted are starting on a career of improvement and elevation of which no man can prophesy the rate or the result.

The old Portuguese referred to would seem to be the same whom Sir John Bowring mentions in the following passage, and who has been so long a faithful servant of the government of Siam that his great age and long-continued services entitle him to a word of honorable mention, notwithstanding the droll appearance which he presented in his remarkable costume. Sir John Bowring, writing in 1856, says:

"Among the descendants of the ancient Portuguese settlers in Siam there was one who especially excited our attention. He was the master of the

ceremonies at our arrival in Paknam, and from his supposed traditional or hereditary acquaintance with the usages of European courts, we found him invested with great authority on all state occasions. He wore a European court dress, which he told me had been given him by Sir James Brooke, and which, like a rusty, old cocked hat, was somewhat the worse for wear. But I was not displeased to recognize in him a gentleman whom Mr. Crawford (the British ambassador in 1822) thus describes:

"'July 10 (1822). I had in the course of this forenoon a visit from a person of singular modesty and intelligence. Pascal Ribeiro de Alvergarias, the descendant of a Portuguese Christian of Kamboja. This gentleman holds a high Siamese title, and a post of considerable importance. Considering his means and situation, his acquirements were remarkable, for he not only spoke and wrote the Siamese, Kambojan, and Portuguese languages with facility, but also spoke and wrote Latin with considerable propriety. We found, indeed, a smattering of Latin very frequent among the Portuguese interpreters at Bangkok, but Señor Ribeiro was the only individual who made any pretence to speak it with accuracy. He informed us that he was the descendant of a person of the same name, who settled at Kamboja in the year 1685. His lady's genealogy, however, interested us more than his own. She was the lineal descendant of an Englishman, of the name of Charles Lister, a merchant, who settled in Kamboja in the year 1701, and who had acquired some reputation at the court by making pretence to a knowl-

ONE OF THE SONS OF THE LATE FIRST KING.

edge in medicine. Charles Lister had come immediately from Madras, and brought with him his sister. This lady espoused a Portuguese of Kamboja, by whom she had a son, who took her own name. Her grandson, of this name also, in the revolution of the kingdom of Kamboja, found his way to Siam; and here, like his great-uncle, practising the healing art, rose to the station of Maha-pet, or first physician to the king. The son of this individual, Cajitanus Lister, is at present the physician, and at the same time the minister and confidential adviser of the present King of Kamboja. His sister is the wife of the subject of this short notice. Señor Ribeiro favored us with the most authentic and satisfactory accouut which we had yet obtained of the late revolution and present state of Kamboja.'"

It is not safe always to judge by the appearance. This grotesque old personage, whom the narrative describes, represented a story of strange and romantic interest, extending through two centuries of wonderful vicissitude, and involving the blending of widely separated nationalities. But to resume the narrative:

When at last, after our stay in Bangkok was almost at an end, we were invited by "supremus rex" to spend the evening at his palace, we found our friend of the beaver hat and sky-blue coat and purple breeches in charge of a squad of attendants in one of the outer buildings of the court, where we were to beguile the time with more refreshments until his majesty should be ready for us. Everything about us was on a larger scale than at the second king's—

the grounds more spacious, and the various structures with which they were filled, the temples, armories, and storehouses, of more ambitious size and style, but not so neat and orderly. A crowd of admiring spectators clustered about the windows of the room in which we were waiting, watching with breathless interest to see the strangers eat: so that as we sat in all the glory of cocked hats and epaulets, we had the double satisfaction of giving and receiving entertainment.

But presently there came a messenger to say that the king was ready for us. And so we walked on between the sentries, who saluted us with military exactness, between the stately halls that ran on either hand, until a large, closed gateway barred our way. Swinging open as we stood before them, the gates closed silently behind us, and we found ourselves in the august presence of "Rex Supremus Siamensium."

It might almost have been "the good Haroun Alraschid" and "the great pavilion of the caliphat in inmost Bagdad," that we had come to, it was so imposing a scene, and so characteristically Oriental. What I had read of in the "Arabian Nights," and hardly thought was possible except in such romantic stories, seemed to be realized. Here was a king worth seeing, a real king, with a real crown on, and with real pomp of royalty about him. I think that every American who goes abroad has a more or less distinct sense of being defrauded of his just rights when, in Paris or Berlin, for example, he goes out to see the king or emperor, and is shown a plainly-dressed man driving quietly and almost undistin-

guished among the throng of carriages. We feel that this is not at all what we came for, nor what we had been led to expect when, as schoolboys, we read about imperial magnificence and regal splendor, and the opulence of the "crowned heads." The crowned head might have passed before our very eyes, and we would not have known it if we had not been told. Not so in Bangkok. This was "a goodly king" indeed. And all the circumstances of time and place seemed to be so managed as to intensify the singular charm and beauty of the scene.

We stood in a large court, paved with broad, smooth slabs of marble, and open to the sky, which was beginning to be rosy with the sunset. All about us were magnificent palace buildings, with shining white walls, and with roofs of gleaming green and gold. Broad avenues, with the same marble pavement, led in various directions to the temples and the audience halls. Here and there the dazzling whiteness of the buildings and the pavement was relieved by a little dark tropical foliage; and, as the sunset grew more ruddy every instant,

> "A sudden splendor from behind
> Flushed all the leaves with rich gold green,"

and tinged the whole bright court with just the necessary warmth of color. There was the most perfect stillness, broken only by the sound of our footsteps on the marble, and, except ourselves, not a creature was moving. Here and there, singly or in groups, about the spacious court, prostrate, with faces on the stone, in motionless and obsequious reverence,

as if they were in the presence of a god and not of a man, grovelled the subjects of the mighty sovereign into whose presence we were approaching. It was hard for the stoutest democrat to resist a momentary feeling of sympathy with such universal awe; and to remember that, after all, as Hamlet says, a "king is a thing . . . of nothing." So contagious is the obsequiousness of a royal court and so admirably effective was the arrangement of the whole scene.

The group toward which we were advancing was a good way in front of the gateway by which we had entered. There was a crouching sword-bearer, holding upright a long sword in a heavily embossed golden scabbard. There were other attendants, holding jewel-cases or elegant betel-nut boxes—all prostrate. There were others still ready to crawl off in obedience to orders, on whatever errands might be necessary. There were three or four very beautiful little children, the king's sons, kneeling behind their father, and shining with the chains of jewelled gold which hung about their naked bodies. More in front there crouched a servant holding high a splendid golden canopy, beneath which stood the king. He wore a grass-cloth jacket, loosely buttoned with diamonds, and a rich silken scarf, which, wound about the waist, hung gracefully to his knees. Below this was an unadorned exposure of bare shins, and his feet were loosely slippered. But on his head he wore a cap or crown that fairly blazed with brilliant gems, some of them of great size and value. There was not wanting in his manner a good deal of natural dignity; although it was constrained and embar-

rassed. It was in marked contrast with the cheerful and unceremonious freedom of the second king. He seemed burdened with the care of government and saddened with anxiety, and as if he knew his share of the uneasiness of "the head that wears a crown."

He stood in conversation with us for a few moments, and then led the way to a little portico in the Chinese style of architecture, where we sat through an hour of talk, and drink, and jewelry, mixed in pretty equal proportions. For there were some details of business in connection with the treaty that required to be talked over. And there were sentiments of international amity to be proposed and drunk after the Occidental fashion. And there were the magnificent royal diamonds and other gems to be produced for our admiring inspection—great emeralds of a more vivid green than the dark tropical foliage, and rubies and all various treasures which the Indian mines afford, till the place shone before our eyes, thicker

> "With jewels than the sward with drops of dew,
> When all night long a cloud clings to the hill,
> And with the dawn ascending lets the day
> Strike where it clung ; so thickly shone the gems."

All the while the nobles were squatting or lying on the floor, and the children were playing in a subdued and quiet way at the king's feet. Somehow the beauty of these little Siamese children seemed to me very remarkable. As they grow older, they grow

lean, and wrinkled, and ugly. But while they are children they are pretty "as a picture"—as some of those pictures, for example, in the Italian galleries. Going quite innocent of clothing, they are very straight and plump in figure, and unhindered in their grace of motion. And they used to bear themselves with a simple and modest dignity that was very winning. They have the soft and lustrous eyes, the shining teeth (as yet unstained by betel-nut), the pleasant voices, which are the birthright of the children of the tropics. In default of clothes, they are stained all over with some pigment, which makes their skin a lively yellow, and furnishes a shade of contrast for the deeper color of the gold which hangs around their necks and arms. I used to compare them, to their great advantage, with the Chinese children.

There is not in Siam, at least there is not in the same degree, that obstinate conceit behind which, as behind a barrier, the Chinese have stood for centuries, resisting stubbornly the entrance of all light and civilization from without. I do not know what possible power could extort from a Chinese official the acknowledgment which this king freely made, that his people were "half civilized and half barbarous, being very ignorant of civilized and enlightened customs and usages." Such an admission from a Chinaman would be like the demolition of their great northern wall. It is true of nations as it is of individuals, that pride is the most stubborn obstacle in the way of all real progress. And national humility is the earnest of national exaltation. There-

fore it is that the condition of things at the Siamese court seems to me so full of promise.

By and by the king withdrew, and intimated that he would presently meet us again at an entertainment in another part of the palace. His disappearance was the signal for the resurrection of the prostrate noblemen, who started up all around us in an unexpected way, like toads after a rain. Moving toward the new apartment where our "entertainment" was prepared, we saw the spacious court to new advantage. For the night had come while we had waited, and the mellow light from the tropic stars and burning constellations flowed down upon us through the fragrant night air. Mingling with this white starlight was the ruddy glow that came through palace windows from lamps fed by fragrant oil of cocoa-nut, and from the moving torches of our attendants. And as we walked through the broad avenues, dimly visible in this mixed light, some gilded window arch or overhanging roof with gold-green tiles, or the varied costume of the moving group of which we formed a part, would stand out from the shadowy darkness with a sudden and most picturesque distinctness. So we came at last to the apartment where the king had promised to rejoin us.

Here the apparition of our old sky-blue friend, the beaver-hatted Portuguese, suggested that a dinder was impending, and, if we might judge by his uncommon nervousness of manner, it must be a dinner of unprecedented style. And certainly there was a feast, sufficiently sumptuous and very elegantly served, awaiting our arrival. At one side of the

room, on a raised platform, was a separate table for the king, and beside it, awaiting his arrival, was his throne,

> "From which
> Down dropped in many a floating fold,
> Engarlanded and diapered
> With inwrought flowers, a cloth of gold."

In the bright light of many lamps the room was strangely beautiful. On one side, doors opened into a stately temple, out of which presently the king came forth. And as, when he had disappeared, the nobles seemed to come out from the ground like toads, so now, like toads, they squatted, and the sovereign of the squatters took his seat above them.

Presently there was music. A band of native musicians stationed at the foot of the king's throne commenced a lively performance on their instruments. It was strange, wild music, with a plaintive sweetness, that was very enchanting. The tones were liquid as the gurgling of a mountain brook, and rose and fell in the same irregular measure. And when to the first band of instruments there was added another in a different part of the room, the air became tremulous with sweet vibrations, and the wild strains lingered softly about the gilded eaves and cornices and floated upward toward the open sky.

It seemed that the fascination of the scene would be complete if there were added the poetry of motion. And so, in came the dancers, a dozen young girls, pretty and modest, and dressed in robes of which I cannot describe the profuse and costly ornamentation.

The gold and jewels fairly crusted them, and, as the dancers moved, the light flashed from the countless gems at every motion. As each one entered the apartment she approached the king, and, reverently kneeling, slowly lifted her joined hands as if in adoration. All the movements were gracefully timed to the sweet barbaric music, and were slow and languid, and as quiet as the movements in a dream. We sat and watched them dreamily, half bewildered by the splendor which our eyes beheld, and the sweetness which our ears heard, till the night was well advanced and it was time to go. It was a sudden shock to all our Oriental reveries, when, as we rose to leave, his majesty requested that we would give him three cheers. It was the least we could do in return for his royal hospitality, and accordingly the captain led off in the demonstration, while the rest of us joined in with all the heartiness of voice that we could summon. But it broke the charm. Those occidental cheers, that hoarse Anglo-Saxon roar, had no proper place among these soft and sensuous splendors, which had held us captive all the evening, till we had well-nigh forgotten the every-day world of work and duty to which we belonged.

It is when we remember the enervating influence of the drowsy tropics upon character, that we learn fitly to honor the men and women by whom the inauguration of this new era in Siamese history has been brought about. To live for a little while among these sensuous influences without any very serious intellectual work to do, or any very grave moral responsibility to bear, is one thing; but to spend a life

among them, with such a constant strain upon the mind and heart as the laying of Christian foundations among a heathen people must always necessitate, is quite another thing. This is what the missionaries in Siam have to do. Their battle is not with the prejudices of heathenism only, nor with the vices and ignorance of bad men only. It is a battle with nature itself. To the passing traveller, half intoxicated with the beauty of the country and the rich splendor of that oriental world, it may seem a charming thing to live there, and no uninviting lot to be a missionary in such pleasant places. But the very attractiveness of the field to one who sees it as a visitor, and who is dazzled by its splendors as he looks upon it out of kings' palaces, is what makes it all the harder for one who goes with hard, self-sacrificing work to do. The fierce sun wilts the vigor of his mind and scorches up the fresh enthusiasm of his heart.

> "Droops the heavy-blossomed flower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree."

And all the beautiful earth, and all the drowsy air, and all the soft blue sky invite to sloth and ease and luxury.

Therefore I give the greater honor to the earnest men and to the patient women who are laboring and praying for the coming of the Christian day to this benighted people.

His majesty, Phrabat Somdetch Phra Paramendr Maha Mongkut closed his remarkable career on October 1, 1868, under circumstances of peculiar inter-

est. Amid all the cares and anxieties of government he had never ceased to occupy himself with matters of literary and scientific importance. Questions of scholarship in any one of the languages of which he was more or less master were always able to divert and engage his attention. And the approach of the great solar eclipse in August, 1868, was an event the coming of which he had himself determined by his own reckoning, and for which he waited with an impatience half philosophic and half childish. A special observatory was built for the occasion, and an expedition of extraordinary magnitude and on a scale of great expenditure and pomp was equipped by the king's command to accompany him to the post of observation. A great retinue both of natives and of foreigners, including a French scientific commission, attended his majesty, and were entertained at royal expense. And the eclipse was satisfactorily witnessed to the great delight of the king, whose scientific enthusiasm found abundant expression when his calculation was proved accurate.

It was, however, almost his last expedition of any kind. Even before setting out there had been evident signs that his health was breaking. And upon his return it was soon apparent that excitement and fatigue and the malaria of the jungle had wrought upon him with fatal results. He died calmly, preserving to the end that philosophic composure to which his training in the Buddhist priesthood had accustomed him. His private life in his own palace and among his wives and children has been pictured in an entertaining way by Mrs. Leon-

owens, the English lady whose services he employed as governess to his young children. He had apparently his free share of the faults and vices to which his savage nature and his position as an Oriental despot, with almost unlimited wealth and power, gave easy opportunity. It is therefore all the more remarkable that he should have exhibited such sagacity and firmness in his government, and such scholarly enthusiasm in his devotion to literature and science. Pedantic he seems to us often, and with more or less arrogant conceit of his own ability and acquirements. It is easy to laugh at the queer English which he wrote with such reckless fluency and spoke with such confident volubility. But it is impossible to deny that his reign was, for the kingdom which he governed, the beginning of a new era, and that whatever advance in civilization the country is now making, or shall make, will be largely due to the courage and wisdom and willingness to learn which he enforced by precept and example. He died in some sense a martyr to science, while at the same time he adhered, to the last, tenaciously, and it would seem from some imaginary obligation of honor, to the religious philosophy in which he had been trained, and of which he was one of the most eminent defenders. His character and his history are full of the strangest contrasts between the heathenish barbarism in which he was born and the Christian civilization toward which, more or less consciously, he was bringing the people whom he governed. It is in part the power of such contrasts which gives to his reign such extraordinary and picturesque interest.

A FEW OF THE CHILDREN OF THE LATE FIRST KING.

## CHAPTER IX.

### AYUTHIA

THE former capital of Siam, which in its day was a city of great magnificence and fame, has been for many years supplanted by Bangkok; and probably a sight of the latter city as it now is gives to the traveller the best impression of what the former used to be. So completely does the interest of the kingdom centre at Bangkok that few travellers go beyond the limits of the walls of that city except in ascending or descending the river which leads to it from the sea. For a description of Ayuthia in its glory we are obliged to turn back to the old German traveller who visited Siam during the first half of the seventeenth century. Sir John Bowring has connected this ancient narrative with that of a recent observer who has visited the ruins of the once famous city. We quote from Bowring's narrative:

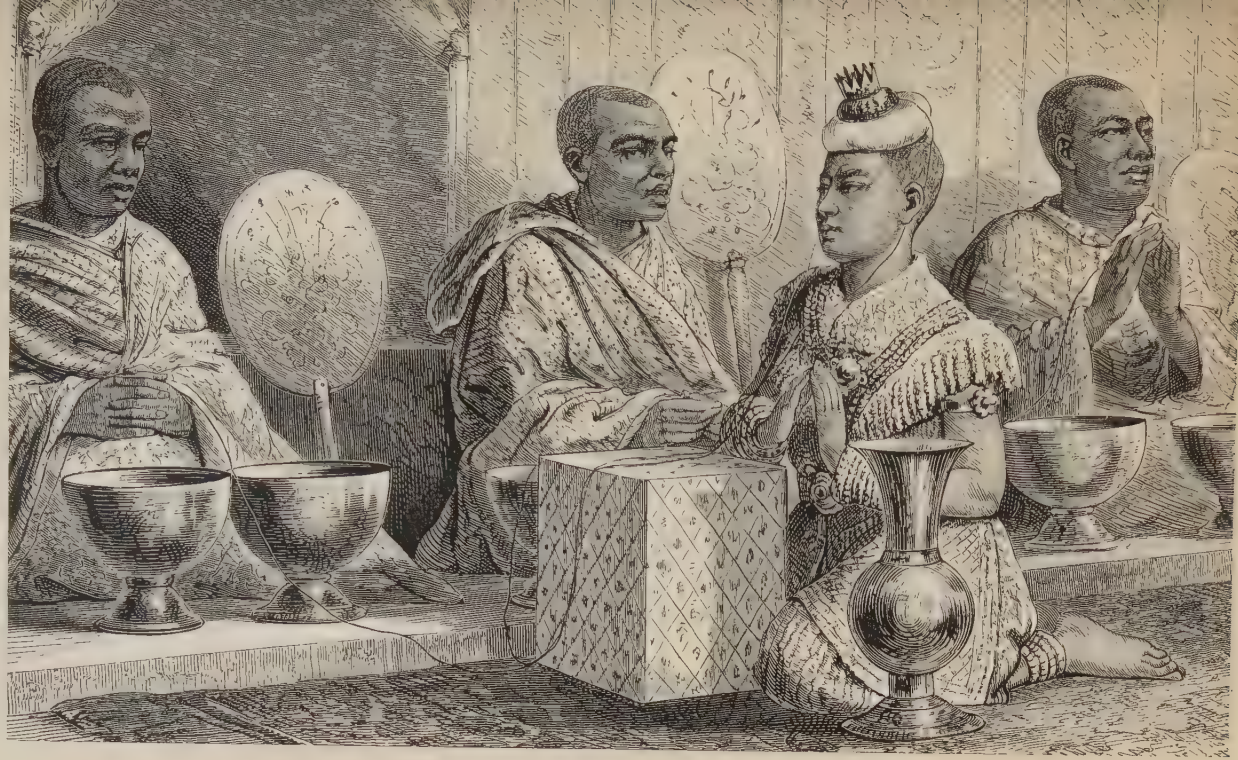
"The ancient city of Ayuthia, whose pagodas and palaces were the object of so much laudation from ancient travellers, and which was called the Oriental Venice, from the abundance of its canals and the beauty of its public buildings, is now almost wholly in ruins, its towers and temples whelmed in the dust and covered with rank vegetation. The native name of Ayuthia was Sijan Thijan, meaning 'Terrestrial

Paradise.' The Siamese are in the habit of giving very ostentatious names to their cities, which, as La Loubère says: 'do signify great things.' Pallegoix speaks of the ambitious titles given to Siamese towns, among which he mentions 'the City of Angels,' 'the City of Archangels,' and the 'Celestial Spectacle.'

"The general outlines of the old city so closely resemble those of Bangkok, that the map of the one might easily be mistaken for the representation of the other.

"It may not be out of place here to introduce the description of Ayuthia from the pen of Mandelsloe —one of those painstaking travellers whose contributions to geographical science have been collected in the ponderous folios of Dr. Harris (vol. i., p. 781)." Mandelsloe reports that:

"The city of Judda is built upon an island in the river Meinam. It is the ordinary residence of the king of Siam, having several very fair streets, with spacious channels regularly cut. The suburbs are on both sides of the river, which, as well as the city itself, are adorned with many temples and palaces; of the first of which there are above three hundred within the city, distinguished by their gilt steeples, or rather pyramids, and afford a glorious prospect at a distance. The houses are, as all over the Indies, but indifferently built and covered with tiles. The royal palace is equal to a large city. Ferdinando Mendez Pinto makes the number of inhabitants of this city amount, improbably, to four hundred thousand families. It is looked upon as impregnable, by



REMOVAL OF THE TUFT OF A YOUNG SIAMESE.

reason of the overflowing of the river at six months' end. The king of Siam, who takes amongst his other titles that of Paecan Salsu, *i.e.*—Sacred Member of God—has this to boast of, that, next to the Mogul, he can deduce his descent from more kings than any other in the Indies. He is absolute, his privy councillors, called mandarins, being chosen and deposed barely at his pleasure. When he appears in public it is done with so much pomp and magnificence as is scarce to be imagined, which draws such a veneration to his person from the common people, that, even in the streets as he passes by, they give him godlike titles and worship. He marries no more than one wife at a time, but has an infinite number of concubines. He feeds very high; but his drink is water only, the use of strong liquors being severely prohibited by their ecclesiastical law, to persons of quality in Siam. As the thirds of all the estates of the kingdom fall to his exchequer, so his riches must be very great; but what makes them almost immense is, that he is the chief merchant in the kingdom, having his factors in all places of trade, to sell rice, copper, lead, saltpetre, etc., to foreigners. Mendez Pinto makes his yearly revenue rise to twelve millions of ducats, the greatest part of which, being laid up in his treasury, must needs swell to an infinity in process of time." Sir John Bowring adds:

"I have received the following account of the present condition of Ayuthia, the old capital of Siam, from a gentleman who visited it in December, 1855:

"'Ayuthia is at this time the second city of the

kingdom. Situated, as the greater part is, on a creek or canal, connecting the main river with a large branch which serves as the high road to Pakpriau, Korat, and southern Laos, travellers are apt entirely to overlook it when visiting the ruins of the various wats or temples on the island where stood the ancient city.

"'The present number of inhabitants cannot be less than between twenty and thirty thousand, among which are a large number of Chinese, a few Birmese, and some natives of Laos. They are principally employed in shopkeeping, agriculture, or fishing, for there are no manufactories of importance. Floating houses are most commonly employed as dwellings, the reason for which is that the Siamese very justly consider them more healthy than houses on land.

"'The soil is wonderfully fertile. The principal product is rice, which, although of excellent quality, is not so well adapted for the market as that grown nearer the sea, on account of its being much lighter and smaller. A large quantity of oil, also an astringent liquor called toddy, and sugar, is manufactured from the palm (Elaeis), extensive groves of which are to be found in the vicinity of the city. I was shown some European turnips which had sprung up and attained a very large size. Indigenous fruits and vegetables also flourish in great plenty. The character of the vegetation is, however, different from that around Bangkok. The cocoa and areca palms become rare, and give place to the bamboo.

"'The only visible remains of the old city are a large number of wats, in different stages of decay.

They extend over an area of several miles of country, and lie hidden in the trees and jungle which have sprung up around them. As the beauty of a Siamese temple consists not in its architecture, but in the quantity of arabesque work with which the brick and stucco walls are covered, it soon yields to the power of time and weather, and becomes, if neglected, an unsightly heap of bricks and wood-work, overgrown with parasitical plants. It is thus at Ayuthia. A vast pile of bricks and earth, with here and there a spire still rearing itself to the skies, marks the spot where once stood a shrine before which thousands were wont to prostrate themselves in superstitious adoration. There stand also the formerly revered images of Gaudama, once resplendent with gold and jewels, but now broken, mutilated, and without a shadow of their previous splendor. There is one sacred spire of immense height and size which is still kept in some kind of repair, and which is sometimes visited by the king. It is situated about four miles from the town, in the centre of a plain of paddy-fields. Boats and elephants are the only means of reaching it, as there is no road whatever, except such as the creeks and swampy paddy-fields afford. It bears much celebrity among the Siamese, on account of its height, but can boast of nothing attractive to foreigners but the fine view which is obtained from the summit. This spire, like all others, is but a succession of steps from the bottom to the top ; a few ill-made images affording the only relief from the monotony of the brickwork. It bears, too, none of those ornaments, constructed of broken

crockery, with which the spires and temples of Bangkok are so plentifully bedecked.

"'This is all that repays the traveller for his visit,—a poor remuneration though, were it the curiosity of an antiquarian that led him to the place, for the ruins have not yet attained a sufficient age to compensate for their uninteresting appearance.

"'As we were furnished with a letter from the Phya Kalahom to the governor, instructing him to furnish us with everything requisite for our convenience, we waited on that official, but were unfortunate enough to find that he had gone to Bangkok. The letter was thus rendered useless, for no one dared open it in his absence. Happily, however, we were referred to a nobleman who had been sent from Bangkok to superintend the catching of elephants, and he, without demur, gave us every assistance in his power.

"'After visiting the ruins, therefore, we inspected the kraal or stockade, in which the elephants are captured. This was a large quadrangular piece of ground, enclosed by a wall about six feet in thickness, having an entrance on one side, through which the elephants are made to enter the enclosure. Inside the wall is a fence of strong teak stakes driven into the ground a few inches apart. In the centre is a small house erected on poles and strongly surrounded with stakes, wherein some men are stationed for the purpose of securing the animals. These abound in the neighborhood of the city, but cannot exactly be called wild, as the majority of them have, at some time or other, been subjected to servitude.

They are all the property of the king, and it is criminal to hurt or kill one of them. Once a year, a large number is collected together in the enclosure, and as many as are wanted of those possessing the points which the Siamese consider beautiful are captured. The fine points in an elephant are: a color approaching to white or red, black nails on the toes (the common color of these nails is black and white), and intact tails (for, owing to their pugnacious disposition, it is rarely that an elephant is caught which has not had its tail bitten off). On this occasion the king and a large concourse of nobles assemble together to witness the proceedings; they occupy a large platform on one side of the enclosure. The wild elephants are then driven in by the aid of tame males of a very large size and great strength, and the selection takes place. If an animal which is wanted escapes from the kraal, chase is immediately made after it by a tame elephant, the driver of which throws a lasso to catch the feet of the fugitive. Having effected this, the animal on which he rides leans itself with all its power the opposite way, and thus brings the other violently to the ground. It is then strongly bound, and conducted to the stables.

"'Naturally enough, accidents are of common occurrence, men being frequently killed by the infuriated animals, which are sometimes confined two or three days in the enclosure without food.

"'When elephants are to be sent to Bangkok a floating house has to be constructed for the purpose.

"'As elephants were placed at our disposal we enjoyed the opportunity of judging of their capabilities

in a long ride through places inaccessible to a lesser quadruped. Their step is slow and cautious, and the rider is subjected to a measured roll from side to side, which at first is somewhat disagreeable. In traversing marshes and soft ground they feel their way with their trunks. They are excessively timid; horses are a great terror to them, and, unless they are well trained, the report of a fowling-piece scares them terribly.'

"Above Ayuthia the navigation of the Meinam is often interrupted by sand-banks, but the borders are still occupied by numerous and populous villages; their number diminishes until the marks of human presence gradually disappear—the river is crowded with crocodiles, the trees are filled with monkeys, and the noise of the elephants is heard in the impervious woods. After many days' passage up the river, one of the oldest capitals of Siam, built fifteen hundred years ago, is approached. Its present name is Phit Salok, and it contains about five thousand inhabitants, whose principal occupation is cutting teak-wood, to be floated down the stream to Bangkok.

"The account which Bishop Pallegoix gives of the interior of the country above Ayuthia is not very flattering. He visited it in the rainy season, and says it appeared little better than a desert—a few huts by the side of the stream—neither towns, nor soldiers, nor custom-houses. Rice was found cheap and abundant, everything else wanting. Some of the Bishop's adventures are characteristic. In one place, where he heard pleasant music, he found a mandarin surrounded by his dozen wives, who were playing a family concert.

PAKNAM ON THE MEINAM.

The mandarin took the opportunity to seek information about Christianity, and listened patiently and pleased enough, until the missionary told him one wife must satisfy him if he embraced the Catholic faith, which closed the controversy, as the Siamese said *that* was an impossible condition. In some places the many-colored pagodas towered above the trees, and they generally possessed a gilded Buddha twenty feet in height. The Bishop observes that the influence of the Buddhist priests is everywhere paramount among the Siamese, but that they have little hold upon the Chinese, Malays, or Laos people. In one of the villages they offered a wife to one of the missionaries, but finding the present unacceptable, they replaced the lady by two youths, who continued in his service, and he speaks well of their fidelity."

## CHAPTER X.

### PHRABAT AND PATAWI

ONE of the most famous of the holy places of Siam, and one which it is now comparatively easy to visit, is the shrine of "the footstep of Buddha." This footstep was discovered early in the seventeenth century by the king who is called the founder of the second dynasty. As he had been, before his accession to the throne, a member of the priesthood, and "very popular as a learned and religious teacher," it is easy to see what aptitude he had for such a discovery. It is a favorite resort for pilgrims.

"Bishop Pallegoix," says Bowring, "speaks of a large assemblage of gaily-ornamented barges, filled with multitudes of people in holiday dresses, whom he met above Ayuthia, going on a pilgrimage to the 'foot of Buddha.' The women and girls wore scarfs of silk, and bracelets of gold and silver, and filled the air with their songs, to which troops of priests and young men responded in noisy music. The place of debarkation is Tha Rua, which is on the road to Phrabat, where the footprint of the god is found. More than five hundred barges were there, all illuminated: a drama was performed on the

PAGODA AT MOUNT PHRABAT.

shore; there was a great display of vocal and instrumental music, tea-drinking, playing at cards and dice, and the merry festivities lasted through the whole night.

"Early the following day the cortege departed by the river. It consisted of princes, nobles, rich men, ladies, girls, priests, all handsomely clad. They landed, and many proceeded on foot, while the more distinguished mounted on elephants to move toward the sacred mountain. In such localities the spirit of fanaticism is usually intemperate and persecuting; and the bishop says the governor received him angrily, and accused him of 'intending to debauch his people by making them Christians.' But he was softened by presents and explanations, and ultimately gave the bishop a passport, recommending him to 'all the authorities and chiefs of villages under his command, as a Christian priest (farang), and as his friend, and ordering that he should be kindly treated, protected, and furnished with all the provisions he might require.'

"Of his visit to the sacred mountain, so much the resort of Buddhist pilgrims, Pallegoix gives this account:

"'I engaged a guide, mounted an elephant, and took the route of Phrabat, followed by my people. I was surprised to find a wide and excellent road, paved with bricks, and opened in a straight line across the forests. On both sides of the road, at a league's distance, were halls or stations, with wells dug for the use of the pilgrims. Soon the road became crooked, and we stopped to bathe in a large

pond. At four o'clock we reached the magnificent monastery of Phrabat, built on the declivity, but nearly at the foot of a tall mountain, formed by fantastic rocks of a bluish color. The monastery has several walls surrounding it; and having entered the second enclosure we found the *abbé-prince*, seated on a raised floor, and directing the labors of a body of workmen. His attendants called on us to prostrate ourselves, but we did not obey them. "Silence!" he said; "you know not that the *farang* honor their grandees by standing erect." I approached, and presented him with a bottle of salvolatile, which he smelt with delight. I requested he would appoint some one to conduct us to see the vestige of Buddha; and he called his principal assistant (the *balat*), and directed him to accompany us. The *balat* took us round a great court surrounded with handsome edifices; showed us two large temples; and we reached a broad marble staircase with balustrades of gilded copper, and made the round of the terrace which is the base of the monument. All the exterior of this splendid edifice is gilt; its pavement is square, but it takes the form of a dome, and is terminated in a pyramid a hundred and twenty feet high. The gates and windows, which are double, are exquisitely wrought. The outer gates are inlaid with handsome devices in mother-of-pearl, and the inner gates are adorned with gilt pictures representing the events in the history of Buddha.

"'The interior is yet more brilliant; the pavement is covered with silver mats. At the end, on a throne

ornamented with precious stones, is a statue of Buddha in massive silver, of the height of a man; in the middle is a silver grating, which surrounds the vestige, whose length is about eighteen inches. It is not distinctly visible, being covered with rings, ear ornaments, bracelets, and gold necklaces, the offerings of devotees when they come to worship. The history of the relic is this: In the year 1602, notice was sent to the king, at Ayuthia, that a discovery had been made at the foot of a mountain, of what appeared to be a footmark of Buddha. The king sent his learned men, and the most intelligent priests, to report if the lineaments of the imprint resembled the description of the foot of Buddha, as given in the sacred Pali writings. The examination having taken place, and the report being in the affirmative, the king caused the monastery of Phrabat to be built, which has been enlarged and enriched by his successors.

"'After visiting the monument the *balat* escorted us to a deep well, cut out of the solid stone; the water is good, and sufficient to provide for crowds of pilgrims. The abbé-prince is the sovereign lord of the mountain and its environs within a circuit of eight leagues; he has from four to five thousand men under his orders, to be employed as he directs in the service of the monastery. On the day of my visit a magnificent palanquin, such as is used by great princes, was brought to him as a present from the king. He had the civility to entertain us as well as he could. I remarked that the kitchen was under the care of a score of young girls, and they gave the name

of pages to the youths who attended us. In no other monastery is this usage to be found.

"'His highness caused us to be lodged in a handsome wooden house, and gave me two guards of honor to serve and watch over me, forbidding my going out at night on account of tigers. The following morning I took leave of the good abbé-prince, mounted my elephant, and taking another road, we skirted the foot of the mountain till we reached a spring of spouting waters. We found there a curious plant, whose leaves were altogether like the shape and the colors of butterflies. We took a simple breakfast in the first house we met with; and at four o'clock in the afternoon we reached our boat, and after a comfortable night's rest we left Tha-Rua to return to our church at Ayuthia.'"

M. Mouhot thus describes his journey from Ayuthia, made in the winter of 1858:

"At seven o'clock in the morning my host was waiting for me at the door, with elephants mounted by their drivers, and other attendants necessary for our expedition. At the same hour in the evening we reached our destination, and before many minutes had elapsed all the inhabitants were informed of our arrival; priests and mountaineers were all full of curiosity to look at the stranger. Among the principal people of the place I distributed some little presents, with which they were delighted; but my fire-arms and other weapons were especially the subjects of admiration. I paid a visit to the prince of the mountain, who was detained at home by illness. He ordered breakfast for me; and, expressing his

regret at not being able to accompany me, sent four men to serve as guides and assistants. As a return for his kindness and urbanity, I presented him with a small pistol, which he received with extreme gratification.

"We proceeded afterward to the western side of the mountain, where is the famous temple containing the footprint of Samona-Kodom, the Buddha of Indo-China. I was filled with astonishment and admiration on arriving at this point, and feel utterly incapable of describing the spectacle which met my view. What convulsion of Nature, what force could have upheaved those immense rocks, piled one upon another in such fantastic forms? Beholding such a chaos, I could well understand how the imagination of this simple people, who are ignorant of the true God, should have here discovered signs of the marvellous and traces of their false divinities. It was as if a second and recent deluge had just abated; this sight alone was enough to recompense me for all my fatigues.

"On the mountain summit, in the crevices of the rocks, in the valleys, in the caverns, all around, could be seen the footprints of animals, those of elephants and tigers being most strongly marked; but I am convinced that many of them were formed by antediluvian and unknown animals. All these creatures, according to the Siamese, formed the *cortège* of Buddha in his passage over the mountain.

"As for the temple itself, there is nothing remarkable about it; it is like most of the pagodas in Siam —on the one hand unfinished and on the other in a

state of dilapidation; and it is built of brick, although both stone and marble abound at Phrabat. The approach to it is by a flight of large steps, and the walls are covered with little pieces of colored glass, forming arabesques in great variety, which glitter in the sun with striking effect. The panels and cornices are gilt; but what chiefly attracts attention by the exquisite workmanship are the massive ebony doors, inlaid with mother-of-pearl of different colors, and arranged in beautiful designs. The interior of the temple does not correspond with the outside; the floor is covered with silver matting, and the walls bear traces of gilding, but they are blackened by time and smoke. A catafalque rises in the centre, surrounded with strips of gilded serge, and there is to be seen the famous footprint of Buddha. To this sacred spot the pilgrims bring their offerings, cut paper, cups, dolls, and an immense number of toys, many of them being wrought in gold and silver.

"After staying a week on the mountain, and adding many pretty and interesting objects to my collection, our party returned to Arajik, the prince of Phrabat insisting on sending another guide with me, although my friend, the mandarin, with his attendants and elephants, had kindly remained to escort me back to his village. There I again partook of his hospitality, and, taking leave of him the day following, I resumed my voyage up the river. Before night I arrived at Saraburi, the chief town of the province of Pakpriau and the residence of the governor.

"Saraburi is a place of some extent, the population

consisting chiefly of Siamese, Chinese, and Laotian agriculturists; and consists, like all towns and villages in Siam, of houses constructed of bamboo. They peep out, half hidden, among the foliage along the banks of the river; beyond are rice plantations, and, further in the background, extensive forests, inhabited solely by wild animals.

"On the morning of the 26th we passed Pakpriau, near which the cataracts begin. The waters were still high, and we had much trouble to fight against the current. A little to the north of this town I met with a poor family of Laotian Christians, of whom the good Father Larmandy had spoken to me. We moored our boat near their house, hoping that it would remain in safety while I explored the mountains in the neighborhood and visited Patawi, which is the resort of the Laotian pilgrims, as Phrabat is of the Siamese.

"All the country from the banks of the river to the hills, a distance of about eight or nine miles, and the whole surface of this mountain-range, is covered with brown iron-ore and aërolites; where they occur in the greatest abundance vegetation is scanty and consists principally of bamboo, but it is rich and varied in those places where the detritus has formed a thicker surface of soil. The dense forests furnish gum and oil, which would be valuable for commerce if the indolent natives could be prevailed on to collect them. They are, however, infested with leopards, tigers, and tiger-cats. Two dogs and a pig were carried off from the immediate vicinity of the hut of the Christian guardians of our boat during our stay at Pakpriau; but the following day I had the pleasure

of making the offending leopard pay for the robbery with his life, and his skin served me for a mat.

"Where the soil is damp and sandy I found numerous traces of these animals, but those of the royal tiger are more uncommon. During the night the inhabitants dare not venture out of doors; but in the day-time the creatures, satisfied with the fruits of their predatory rambles, skulk into their dens in the recesses of the woods. One day I went to explore the eastern part of the chain of Pakpriau, and, becoming excited in the chase of a wild boar, we soon lost ourselves in the forest. The animal made his way through the brushwood much more easily than we could, encumbered as we were with guns, hatchets, and boxes, and we ere long missed the scent. By the terrified cries of the monkeys we knew we could not be far from some tiger or leopard, doubtless, like ourselves, in search of prey; and as night was drawing in, it became necessary to retrace our steps homeward for fear of some disagreeable adventure. With all our efforts, however, we could not find the path. We were far from the border of the forest, and were forced to take up our abode in a tree, among the branches of which we made a sort of hammock. On the following day we regained the river.

"I endeavored fruitlessly to obtain oxen or elephants to carry our baggage with a view of exploring the country, but all beasts of burden were in use for the rice-harvest. I therefore left my boat and its contents in charge of the Laotian family, and we set off, like pilgrims, on foot for Patawi, on a fine morning with a somewhat cloudy sky, which recalled to

me the pleasant autumn days of my own country. My only companions were Küe and my young Laotian guide. We followed for three hours, through forests infested with wild beasts, the road to Korat, and at last reached Patawi. As at Phrabat, there is a bell, both at the foot of the mount and at the entrance of a long and wide avenue leading to the pagoda, which the pilgrims ring on arriving, to inform the good genii of their presence and bespeak a favorable hearing of their prayers. The mount is isolated, and about four hundred and fifty feet in height; its formation is similar to that of Phrabat, but although its appearance is equally grand it presents distinct points of variation. Here are not to be seen those masses of rock, piled one upon another, as if hurled by the giants in a combat like that fabled of old. Patawi seems to be composed of one enormous rock, which rises almost perpendicularly like a wall, excepting the centre portion, which toward the south hangs over like a roof, projecting eighteen or twenty feet. At the first glance might be recognized the action of water upon a soil originally clay.

"There are many footprints similar to those of Phrabat, and in several places are to be seen entire trunks of trees in a state of petrifaction lying close to growing individuals of the same species. They have all the appearance of having been just felled, and it is only on testing their hardness with a hammer that one feels sure of not being mistaken. An ascent of several large stone steps leads, on the left hand, to the pagoda, and on the right to the residence of the talapoins, or priests, who are three in number, a su-

perior and two assistants, appointed to watch and pay reverence to the precious 'rays' of Somanakodom. Were the authors who have written about Buddhism ignorant of the signification of the word 'ray' employed by the Buddhists? Now, in the Siamese language the same word which means 'ray' signifies also shadow, and it is through respect for their deity that the first meaning is applied.

"The priests were much surprised to see a 'farang' (foreigner) in their pagoda, but some trifling gifts soon established me in their good graces. The superior was particularly charmed with a magnet which I gave him, and amused himself with it for a long time, uttering cries of delighted admiration as he saw it attract and pick up all the little pieces of metal which he placed near it.

"I went to the extreme north of the mount, where some generous being has kindly had constructed, for the shelter of travellers, a hall, such as is found in many places near pagodas. The view there is indescribably splendid, and I cannot pretend to do justice either with pen or pencil to the grand scenes which here and elsewhere were displayed before my eyes. I can but seize the general effect and some of the details; all I can promise to do is to introduce nothing which I have not seen. Hitherto all the views I had seen in Siam had been limited in extent, but here the beauty of the country is exhibited in all its splendor. Beneath my feet was a rich and velvety carpet of brilliant and varied colors; an immense tract of forest, amid which the fields of rice and the unwooded spots appeared like little streaks of green;

beyond, the ground, rising gradually, swells into hills of different elevations; farther still to the north and east, in the form of a semicircle, is the mountain-chain of Phrabat and that of the kingdom of Muang-Lôm; and in the extreme distance those of Korat, fully sixty miles distant. All these join one another, and are, in fact, but a single range. But how describe the varieties of form among all these peaks! In one place they seem to melt into the vapory rose-tints of the horizon, while near at hand the peculiar structure and color of the rocks bring out more strongly the richness of the vegetation; there, again, are deep shadows vying with the deep blue of the heaven above; everywhere those brilliant sunny lights, those delicate hues, those warm tones, which make the *tout ensemble* perfectly enchanting. The spectacle is one which the eye of a painter can seize and revel in, but which his brush, however skilful, can transfer most imperfectly to his canvas.

"At the sight of this unexpected panorama a cry of admiration burst simultaneously from all mouths. Even my poor companions, generally insensible to the beauties of nature, experienced a moment of ecstasy at the sublimity of the scene. 'Oh! *di, di!*' (beautiful) cried my young Laotian guide; and when I asked Küe what he thought of it, 'Oh! master,' he replied, in his mixed jargon of Latin, English, and Siamese, 'the Siamese see Buddha on a stone, and do not see God in these grand things. I am pleased to have been to Patawi.'

"On the opposite side, viz., the south, the picture is different. Here is a vast plain, which extends

from the base of Patawi and the other mountains beyond Ayuthia, whose high towers are visible in the distance, 120 miles off. At the first glance one distinguishes what was formerly the bed of the sea, this great plain having taken the place of an ancient gulf: proof of which is afforded by numerous marine shells, many of which I collected in a perfect state of preservation, while the rocks, with their footprints and fossil shells, are indicative of some great change at a still earlier period.

"Every evening some of the good Laotian mountaineers came to see the 'farang.' These Laotians differ slightly from the Siamese: they are more slender, have the cheek-bones more prominent, and have also darker complexions. They wear their hair long, while the Siamese shave half of the head, leaving the hair to grow only on the top. They deserve praise for their intrepidity as hunters, if they have not that of warriors. Armed with a cutlass or bow, with which latter weapon they adroitly launch, to a distance of one hundred feet, balls of clay hardened in the sun, they wander about their vast forests, undismayed by the jaguars and tigers infesting them. The chase is their principal amusement, and, when they can procure a gun and a little Chinese powder, they track the wild boar, or, lying in wait for the tiger or the deer, perch themselves on a tree or in a little hut raised on bamboo stakes.

"Their poverty borders on misery, but it mainly results from excessive indolence, for they will cultivate just sufficient rice for their support; this done, they pass the rest of their time in sleep, lounging

about the woods, or making excursions from one village to another, paying visits to their friends on the way.

"At Patawi I heard much of Korat, which is the capital of the province of the same name, situated five days' journey northeast of Pakpriau—that is about one hundred and twenty miles—and I determined, if possible, to visit it by and by. It appears to be a rich country, producing especially silk of good quality. Caoutchouc-trees abound, but are neglected by the inhabitants, who are probably ignorant of their value. I brought back a magnificent specimen of the gum, which was much admired by the English merchants at Bangkok. Living, according to report, is fabulously cheap: six fowls may be purchased for a *fuang* (37 centimes), 100 eggs for the same sum, and all other things in proportion. But to get there one has to cross the famous forest of 'the King of the Fire,' which is visible from the top of Patawi, and it is only in the dry season that it is safe to attempt this; during the rains both the water and the atmosphere are fatally pestilential. The superstitious Siamese do not dare to use fire-arms there, from fear of attracting evil spirits who would kill them.

"During all the time I spent on the top of the mountain the chief priest was unremitting in his attentions to me. He had my luggage carried into his own room, gave me up his mats to add to mine, and in other ways practised self-denial to make me as comfortable as was in his power. The priests complain much of the cold in the rainy season, and of the torrents which then rush from the summit of the

mountain; they are also greatly disturbed by the tigers, which, driven from the plains by the inundations, take refuge on the high ground, and carry away their dogs and fowls out of the very houses. But their visits are not confined to that period of the year. About ten o'clock on the second night of my stay the dogs suddenly began to utter plaintive howls. 'A tiger! a tiger!' cried my Laotian, who was lying near me. I started up, seized my gun, and half opened the door; but the profound darkness made it impossible to see anything, or to go out without uselessly exposing myself. I therefore contented myself with firing off my gun to frighten the creature. The next morning we found one of our dogs gone.

"We scoured the neighborhood for about a week, and then set off once more by water for Bangkok, as I wished to put my collections in order and send them off.

"The places which two months previously had been deep in water were now dry, and everywhere around their dwellings the people were digging their gardens and beginning to plant vegetables. The horrible mosquitoes had reappeared in greater swarms than ever, and I pitied my poor servants, who, after rowing all day, could obtain no rest at night.

"During the day, especially in the neighborhood of Pakpriau, the heat was intense, the thermometer being ordinarily at 90° Fahrenheit (28° Reaumur) in the shade, and 140° Fahrenheit (49° Reaumur) in the sun. Luckily, we had no longer to contend with the current, and our boat, though heavily laden, proceeded

rapidly. We were about three hours' sail from Bangkok, when I perceived a couple of European boats, and in a room built for travellers near a pagoda I recognized three English captains of my acquaintance, one of whom had brought me to Singapore. They were, with their wives, enjoying a picnic, and, on seeing me, insisted on my joining them and partaking of the repast.

"I reached Bangkok the same day, and was still uncertain as to a lodging, when M. Wilson, the courteous Danish consul, came to me, and kindly offered the hospitality of his magnificent house.

"I consider the part of the country which I had just passed through extremely healthy, except, perhaps, during the rains. It appears that in this season the water, flowing down from the mountains and passing over a quantity of poisonous detritus, becomes impregnated with mineral substances, gives out pestilential miasmata, and causes the terrible jungle-fever, which, if it does not at once carry off the victim, leaves behind it years of suffering. My journey, as has been seen, took place at the end of the rainy season and when the floods were subsiding; some deleterious exhalations, doubtless, still escaped, and I saw several natives attacked with intermittent fever, but I had not had an hour's illness. Ought I to attribute this immunity to the regimen I observed, and which had been strongly recommended to me—abstinence, all but total, from wine and spirits, and drinking only tea, never cold water? I think so; and I believe by such a course one is in no great danger."

## CHAPTER XI.

### FROM BANGKOK TO CHANTABOUN—A MISSIONARY JOURNEY IN 1835

FOR many years the region on the eastern shore of the gulf has been more or less familiar to the foreign residents in Bangkok. So long ago as 1835 the Protestant missionaries explored and mapped out, with a good degree of accuracy, the coast line from the mouth of the Meinam to the mouth of the Chantaboun River. Extracts from the journal of Dr. Bradley, a pioneer among American missionaries in Siam, give an interesting sketch of the country as it was, as well as of the modes of travel many years ago, and the beginnings of the civilization in which, since that time, Siam has made such extraordinary progress.

Dr. Bradley, accompanied by another missionary and wife, made his journey in the first vessel ever built in Siam on a European model. A young nobleman, who has since then become very distinguished by reason of his interest in scientific pursuits of every kind, and his attainments in various branches of knowledge, had built at Chantaboun a brig which he had named the Ariel, and was about returning from Bangkok to that port. With the liberality and kindness by which his conduct

toward the missionaries has always been characterized, he invited Dr. Bradley and his colleague to be his guests on the return voyage. Dr. Bradley thus speaks of the Ariel.

"Went aboard of the brig Ariel to have a look at the first square-rigged vessel ever made in Siam, and brought up a few days since from Chantaboun to present to the king. Considering that this is the first essay made in this country to imitate European ship-building, that the young nobleman had but poor models, if any, to guide him, and that all his knowledge of ship-building has been gathered by here and there an observation of foreign vessels in port, this brig certainly reflects very great credit on his creative genius. Not only this, but other facts also indicate that the young nobleman is endowed with an uncommonly capacious mind for a Siamese. It appears that he is building at Chantaboun several vessels of from 300 to 400 tons burthen. His wife has just left our house, having spent the evening with Mrs. B. She possesses many interesting qualities, and, like her husband, is fond of the society of Europeans and Americans. Her attendants were three or four females who paddled the sampan in which she came, and carried her betel-box and other accompaniments. They remained at the door in a crouching posture, while their mistress visited Mrs. B. Her dress consisted of a phanung of ordinary cloth, a Birmese jacket of crimson crape, a scarlet sash of the same material, and a leaden-colored shawl of the richest damask silk."

All preparations being made for the excursion, and

an abundant supply of Christian tracts laid in for distribution among the natives as opportunity might offer, Dr. Bradley's narrative continues, under date of November 12, 1835:

"One of the most delightful mornings I have seen since I left my dear native land. While the brig Ariel floated down with the tide, I called upon my brethren in company with my wife, when I took leave of her for the first time since we were married. The brig had made more progress than we were aware, which subjected us to the inconvenience of overtaking her in an open boat under a burning sun. She was under full press of sail before we reached her, but with much exertion on our part to inspire our paddlers to lay out more strength, by crying out in Chinese tongue *qui qui*, and in the Siamese *reow reow*, and by a full-souled response on their part, we reached the brig at 12 A.M. We were somewhat disappointed in finding the cabin exclusively occupied by the mother and sisters of Luang Nai Sit, who being high in rank as females, must of course have the best accommodations on board. The mother is allied to the royal family, and consequently ranks higher than her husband, the p'rak'lang, though he is one of the first in point of office, being commander-in-chief of the Siamese forces, and prime-minister of foreign affairs. But Luang Nai Sit did all he could to make us comfortable on deck, spreading a double awning over us, one of thin canvas, and the other of attap leaves. Our pride was somewhat uncomfortably tried by finding ourselves dependent upon K'oon Klin, the wife of Luang Nai Sit, for the common comforts of shipboard.

But it is due to her and her husband to say that they were both very polite, and evidently regretted that they could not then make us perfectly comfortable. They anxiously encouraged us with the promise that after a little time they would have matters in a better state, saying that their mother and sisters would leave the brig at Paknam, and give us the occupancy of the cabin.

"The more I dwell upon it the more I am interested in the Providence that has brought us on board this vessel. But it may be asked, What is there peculiarly interesting in it? Why, here is a new Siamese brig, recently presented to the king of Siam, as the first specimen of a successful imitation of European ship-building, on her first voyage, volunteered by one of the first men in the kingdom to bear a company of missionaries to a province of Siam, carrying the everlasting gospel to a people who have never heard it, and who, to use the expression of the nobleman who has volunteered to take us thither, 'have no God, no religion, and greatly need the labors of missionaries among them.'

"On awaking the next morning, I find that we are lying at anchor opposite Paknam, where the mother and sisters of our noble friend are to disembark. It is truly affecting to witness the kind attentions of Luang Nai Sit, and to observe how ready he is to anticipate our wants, and prepare to meet them. Last evening, while we were singing, a company of native singers removed their seats at the forecastle, and sitting down near to us, began to bawl out in the native style. Luang Nai Sit soon came to us and re-

quested that we should go to the upper deck, and take seats which he had prepared for us, saying, 'There is too much confusion for you to stay here; go up yonder, and bless God undisturbed.'

"These native singers, I am informed, are now practising with a view to sing to the white elephant at Chantaboun. They sang many times a day, of which I have become heartily sick.

"We weighed anchor very early in the morning of the 14th, and sailed with the tide in our favor for the bar. We were interested in witnessing the outgushings of maternal and filial affection of the noble relatives just before we sailed from Paknam. Luang Nai Sit exhibited much of it on parting with his mother, and she was tenderly moved on taking leave of her son and grandchildren. [One of the latter was a little boy, who afterward became prime minister and minister of war.] We noticed that their tears were allowed to flow only in the cabin, out of sight of their slaves. On deck, and when in the act of parting, they were solemn and perfectly composed. A little after sunrise we came in sight of the mountains of Keo, which to me was a peculiarly gratifying sight. I had for months sighed after something of the kind to interrupt the dead monotony of Bangkok. There, do what you may by the means of telescopes and towers, you will discover nothing but one unbroken plain."

We condense Dr. Bradley's journal from this point, omitting unnecessary details of the voyage:

"Arose at four in the morning of the 15th, and found that we were at anchor a little south of the Keo

Mountains, having Koh Chang or See Chang on the west, eight miles distant, and the coast of See Maha Racha on the east, five miles distant. I know not when I have been so delighted with natural scenery as at this time. Not a cloud was seen in the heavens. The moon walked in brightness amid myriads of twinkling suns and shining worlds. A balmy and gentle breeze just ruffled the bosom of the deep. The wonted confusion of the deck was perfectly hushed. Lofty mountains and a rugged and romantic coast darkened the eastern horizon. At five o'clock Luang Nai Sit invited us to go ashore with him. We readily accepted the invitation and accompanied our friend to the village of See Maha Racha, attended by his body-guard, armed with guns, swords, and lances. The scenery, as the dawn brightened, was most exhilarating. The mountains, hills, and plains were covered with vegetation in the liveliest green, with here and there a cultivated spot. As we approached the settlement from the west, at our right was a rock-bound coast. Just in the background of this, and parallel with it, was an admirably undulated ridge, which seemed to be composed of hill rolled close upon hill. At our left were islands of lofty white-capped rocks. Further removed, at the east, were mountains towering behind mountains. Before us was an extensive plain bounded with mountains far in the distance. We reached the village a little after sunrise, which we found to contain three hundred or four hundred souls, chiefly Siamese. It was a matter of not a little regret that we had no tracts to give them. The people seemed to live in somewhat of a tidy manner, not

very unlike a poor villager in our own country. Still their houses were built of bamboo, and elevated, according to the Siamese custom, as on stilts. We called at several houses, and found the females engaged in eating their rice. We attempted to penetrate the jungle behind the settlement, but did not go far, as there seemed to be but little prospect that we should descry other settlements.

"Having spent a part of an hour in surveying the village, we followed our honorable guide along the beach, among immense ferruginous and quartz rocks having apparently been undermined by the restless ocean, and these were interlaid with small seashells of great variety. On the one hand we had the music of the roaring tide, on the other an admirable jungle, overhanging the beach from the east, and thus protecting us from the blaze of the rising sun, while the air was perfumed with many a flower. Several boatloads of Luang Nai Sit's retinue soon came off the brig to the shore, which composed a company of fifty or more. At length a boat came loaded with provisions for a picnic breakfast, all cooked and duly arranged on salvers. The whole company (ourselves excepted) sat down on the beach in three classes, and there partook of the repast with a keen relish. Luang Nai Sit and his brothers ate by themselves; the women, consisting of K'oon Klin, or wife of the chief, and her children and other high blood attendants, ate by themselves. After these had finished their breakfast, the multitude of dependents messed together. Meanwhile the natives of the village and vicinity flocked in, loaded with plantains, red peppers, ceri-

leaves, cocoanuts, jack-fruit, etc., and presented them as tokens of respect to the son of their lord, the p'rak'lang, and to him they bowed and worshipped on their hands and knees. At 10 A.M. we returned to the brig in an uncovered boat, in company with K'oon Klin and her train. Luang Nai Sit could not, of course, return in the same boat with the women, as it would be a violation of Siamese custom. He came in another boat behind us. The sun was very powerful, and that, together with the crowd and confusion of the company in the absence of their chief, quite overcame me in my feebleness of health.

"At 11 A.M. our anchor was again weighed, and we sailed very pleasantly before a gentle breeze, being continually in full sight of the main-land at our left, and the islands of Koh Kram, Sewalan, and a number of others on our right. The former is noted for the quantities of turtles which are caught on its coasts, the latter is a cluster of verdant spots, probably uninhabited by man. Much of the mainland which we have as yet passed is mountainous, diversified with extensive plains, and covered with lofty timber. With the aid of the brig's telescope we descried several villages on the shore."

After beating about for a night and a day in a good deal of uncertainty and some peril (for the Siamese officers and crew were unskilful navigators), "we were not a little disappointed on the morning of the 18th in supposing that we were entering the mouth of Chantaboun River, which proved to be but a passage between the island of Semet and the main coast. It seems that we have been beating for this passage be-

tween thirty and forty hours, and but a few miles from it all the time. The scenery about this place is quite charming, combining much of the romantic with the beautiful. Have sailed twenty or thirty miles this afternoon in full sight of the coast, passing many small islands, which have given us a very pleasing variety. Much of the coast is level near the sea, with towering mountains, several miles distant. One island which we passed near by is worthy of some notice. It is quite small, composed of rocks, which rise sixty or eighty feet above the water, and crowned with pleasant shrubbery. It has a wing extending out fifty feet or more, which is about thirty feet high, and through this there is a natural tunnel, having much the appearance of an artificial arch of stone, and apparently large enough to allow a common-sized boat to pass. Hence the islet is called Koh Lŏŏ.

"On the morning of the 19th, the curtains of a tempestuous night having been removed, very much to our joy we found that we were in sight of our desired haven, and we enjoyed much interesting scenery while tossing about during the day. There are many bold islands in this vicinity, with rocky bases, and crowned with luxuriant vegetation. Koh Ch'ang lies fifteen or twenty miles south of us. It is a large island, with lofty peaks, and it is said to be famous for elephants and that there are several thousand souls upon it. Prit Prote are three small islands, interesting only as affording pleasant objects to the eye of the naturalist. Koh Nom Low is a very curious pinnacle near the entrance into the mouth of Chantaboun River. With a small base, it rises out of the sea prob-

ably four hundred feet. The mouth of the river is admirably guarded by an arm of a mountain ridge, which extends out into the sea and embraces the harbor, which is also artificially protected by two batteries. The coast extends east by southeast. That part of it east of the river, in the immediate vicinity of the sea, is level, low, and covered with a thick jungle. The main body of the trees appear low, having interspersed among them many tall trees, with here and there small hills, handsomely attired. Parallel with this coast, and apparently ten miles from the sea, the mountain Sal Bap towers into the clouds, and stretches a long way to the north and to the south. The coast west of the river is rugged and mountainous. In the apparent direction of the river there are several sublime peaks. As far as the eye can command, vegetation appears luxuriant, but is quite different from that of Bangkok. The cocoanut palm, which is the queen of all the jungles in that vicinity, is not to be seen here. The appearance of the water about the mouth of this river is perfectly clear, while that of the Meinam is extremely turbid."

At this point the missionaries' Siamese friend left them and proceeded in advance to Chantaboun. On the day following, November 21st, "he sent back a small junk for us, which we gladly accepted, and took passage in her, starting in the morning, and expected of course that we should arrive at our destination early in the evening. But almost every rod of our way seemed beset with extraordinary obstacles. In the first place, we had a strong contrary wind to contend with, which obliged us to beat till late in the

afternoon with but little success. In the early evening the breeze became gentle, when, with great entreaty on our part, our boatmen were induced to take to their oars. Presently we found a strong current against us, and within the next half hour our boat touched the bottom of the channel and became immovable in the mud. Now it seemed certain that instead of reaching our destination early in the evening, as we had hoped, we should be under the necessity of staying aboard of our craft all night, exposed to the inclemency of the night air, and with but a scanty supply of food. It was well that we had taken a late breakfast, for a cup of tea with sea bread and cheese had to suffice both for our dinner and supper. With these we satisfied the cravings of hunger, being, I trust, thankful to God that we were so well fed. Having taken our frugal supper we sought for places to lodge ourselves for the night. As for a cabin, of course there was none in such a junk. There were *holds*, but they were filled with luggage. My fellow-travellers preferred to seek their rest on the open deck in a half-reclining posture, wrapped up in their cloaks. I found a place in the 'hinder part of the ship' just large enough to lie down in, where I spread my mattress and tried to sleep. About midnight the tide rose and bore our junk away from the mud. But it was only a little time when it was announced by a singular scraping on our boat's bottom, and by a tremendous scolding of a party of Chinamen whom we had met, that we had found another obstacle. It was soon revealed that we had got entangled in a fish-net belonging to

the Chinamen. Here we were detained an hour or more in efforts to disengage our boat from the ropes of the fish-net. After this was done I know not what other impediments we met with, for I fell into a sleep.

"At 4 A.M. it was announced that we had arrived at our destination. We shook off our slumbers and looked out, and behold our junk was anchored in front of a house with open doors, literally, and windows without shutters, while a piercing, chilling wind was whistling through it. It proved to be, not in Chantaboun, but several miles below it at a Siamese dockyard. As all our boatmen had gone ashore, and we were left without a guide, we determined to 'stick to the ship' till full day, and accordingly lay down and took another nap. When we arose early in the morning we were surprised to learn that Luang Nai Sit and his retinue had lodged in that bleak house the night before, and had gone up the river to Chantaboun, and that this was the place he designed to have us occupy while we sojourned in this part of Siam. This house assigned to us here is situated over the water, exposed to the strong north winds that blow from the opposite side of the river. It is built of bamboo slats and small poles, so as to operate as a kind of sieve for the bleak winds. The most of the floor is also of bamboo slats, and admits strong currents of air through them, while the waves are both heard and seen dashing beneath them. The roof is made of attap leaves, which rattle like hail in the wind. The best rooms in the house, two in number, are enclosed with bamboo slats and lined

with cajung. These were politely assigned to us by our kind friend, who is ever ready to deny himself to oblige us. This would be a delightfully cool place in the spring and summer months, but at this season of the year it is unpleasantly chilly.

"This place has no importance, only what is connected with the ship-building carried on here. There are now on the stocks not less than fifty vessels, consisting of two ships of three hundred or four hundred tons burden, thirty or forty war-boats or junks, and a number of smaller craft."

On the following day the missionaries made an excursion up the river as high as the p'rak'lang's establishment, where "we left our boat and proceeded by land two or three miles to Bang Ka Chah. The river up to the place where we left it is exceedingly serpentine, the banks being low and overflowed by the tides, and covered with an impenetrable jungle of low timber.

"As we drew near the p'rak'lang's there appeared pleasant fields of paddy, and at a distance a beautiful acclivity partially cleared, around which government is building extensive fortifications. The works are rapidly advancing. The circumference of the enclosure when finished will not vary much from two miles. The embankment is forty feet above the surface of the ground, and the depth of the ditch on the outside will increase it six feet. The earth is of a remarkably red color, and gives the embankment the appearance of solid brick. This is to be surrounded by a breastwork six feet high, with portholes, and made of brick literally dug out of the

earth, which, a few feet from the surface, possesses the consistence of brick that had been a little dried in the sun. Blocks eighteen inches in length, nine in breadth, and six in thickness, are cut out by Chinamen and Malays, which, with a little smoothing, are prepared for laying into the wall.

"We were objects of great curiosity to the natives. Our *passport* was only to tell them that we came from Bangkok in Koon Sit's brig, and this was perfectly satisfactory. With the idea that Bang Ka Chah was but a little way onward, we continued to walk, being very much exhilarated by the sight of palmy plains, palmy hills and extensive rice plantations. The country appeared to have a first-rate soil, and to be very extensively cultivated. The paddy fields were heavy laden and well filled. It was harvest time. In one direction you might see reapers; in another gatherers of the sheaves; in another threshers; one with his buffaloes treading out the grain, another with his bin and rack, against which he was beating the sheaves. The lots were divided by foot-paths merely, consisting of a little ridge thrown up by the farmers.

"In Bang Ka Chah we found a settlement of four thousand or more Chinese. Our guide conducted us to a comfortable house, where, much to my comfort, we were offered a place to lie down, and presented with tea and fruit. We had not been in the place ten minutes before we had attracted around us hundreds of men, women, and children, who were as eager to examine us Americans as the latter once were to examine the Siamese twins. The inhabitants

appeared remarkably healthy. I could not discover a sickly countenance among them. There were many very aged people. Children were particularly abundant and interesting. How inviting a harvest, thought I, is here for the future missionary. The houses are mostly built of brick after the common style of Chinese architecture. The streets are crooked, narrow, and filthy. At 4 o'clock, P.M., we returned to the house of Luang Nai Sit, who lives near his father, the p'rak'lang, where we were refreshed with a good dinner, after which we took to our boats and arrived at our lodgings at seven o'clock in the evening.

"We have made an excursion to the town of Chantaboun. It is about nine miles from the place where we stay, being on the main branch of the river, while Bang Ka Chah is on a smaller one. After we passed the p'rak'lang's, there was much to be seen that was in no small degree interesting. The river was from sixty to eighty yards wide, apparently deep and exceedingly serpentine. The banks were generally cleared of wild timber, gently elevated, uniformly smooth, and cultivated. As we approached Chantaboun, the margin of the river was most charmingly graced with clumps of the bamboo, and several fields were bounded with the same tree. We passed not far from the foot of the lofty mountain Sah Bap, from which point we could also see several other mountains. The top of one was lost in the clouds. Near Chantaboun the river is quite lined on one side with Siamese war-junks on the stocks. The reigning passion of the government at present is to make preparations in this section of

their country for defence against the Cochin-Chinese, and for aggressions against the same if need be.

"We reached Chantaboun at 2 P.M. The natives discovering us as we drew near their place, congregated by scores on the banks of the river to look at us. They were exceedingly excited, the children particularly, and scarcely knew how to contain themselves. Some ran with all their might to proclaim in the most animated manner to the inhabitants ahead that we were coming. Others jumped up and down, laughing and hallooing most merrily. We preferred to pass up the river to the extreme end of the town before we landed, that in coming down by land we might form some estimate of the amount of the inhabitants. The town is situated on both sides of the stream, which is probably eighty yards wide. As we passed along we observed one of the most pleasant situations occupied by a Roman Catholic chapel. Its appearance, together with some peculiarities in the inhabitants, led us to think that the Catholics had got a strong foothold here. We saw only four Siamese priests and no temples. The houses on the river were built principally of bamboo and attap. They were small, elevated five or six feet above the ground, and wore the aspect of old age. The ground on which the town is situated rises gently from the river and is a dry and sandy loam. There were a number of middling-sized junks lying in the river, which proves that the stream is sufficiently deep to admit of the passage of such craft.

"Having reached the farthest extremity of the place, we landed and walked down the principal

street. We were thronged with wondering multitudes, who were Cochin, Tachu, and Hokien-Chinese, with only here and there a Siamese. The inhabitants looked healthy, and were more perfectly dressed than we usually observe in heathen villages in this climate. The day being far spent we could not prolong our stay more than one hour. When we got into our boat to return the people literally surrounded us, although it was in the water. Some stood in the river waist-deep to get a look at the lady of the party, and petitioned that she should rise from her seat, that they might see how tall she was. As we pushed out into the river the multitudes shouted most heartily. There cannot be less than eight thousand or ten thousand souls in Chantaboun, and probably thousands in the immediate vicinity.

"On our return we stopped at Luang Nai Sit's, and spent an hour or more. In looking about the premises we heedlessly entered a large bamboo house, where to our surprise we saw a monster of an elephant, and his excellency, the p'rak'lang, who beckoned to us to enter and directed us to seats. We learned that this elephant was denominated white, and seemed to be an object of great religious veneration. He was as far from being white as black. There appeared to be a little white powder sprinkled upon his back. He was fastened to a post, and a man was feeding him with paddy-grass.

"All the days that we have been in this place have been very uncomfortably cold. We have not only wanted winter clothes, but have found ourselves most comfortable when wrapped up in our cloaks till the

middle and sometimes till after the middle of the day. The natives shiver like the aspen leaf, and they act much as an American in the coldest winter day. The northeast monsoon sweeps over the mountains, and I think produces a current downward from that high and cool region of air, which retains nearly its temperature till after it has passed this place.

"It seems that there are a great number of settlements, within the circumference of a few miles, as large as Bang Ka Chah; that the country is admirably watered by three rivers; and that the soil is rich and peculiarly adapted to the growth of pepper, of which large quantities are raised. There is a small mountain near by, where it is said diamonds are procured. At Bang Ka Chah there is a remarkable cave in a mountain. The country intervening between Bang Ka Chah and Thamai is under a high state of cultivation, being almost exclusively occupied by Chinamen, who cultivate rice, tobacco, pepper, etc. The face of the country is pleasantly undulated. Thamai contains four hundred or five hundred souls, chiefly Chinese. Nung Boah lies east from this place about four miles by the course of the river. It is not a condensed settlement, but an agricultural and horticultural district, with thirty or forty dwellings, perhaps, on every square mile. It is situated on a large plain, a little distance from the foot of the mount Sah Bap. Not more than a quarter of the land is cultivated, while the remainder is covered with small and scrubby junglewood. Multitudes of charming flowers lined both sides of the paths as we walked from one farm to another; and

many a bird was seen of beautiful plumage and some of pleasant note. The graceful tops of cocoanut trees we found a never-failing sign of a human dwelling, and sometimes of a cluster of them. The land is almost wholly occupied by Tachu-Chinese; a few of them have Siamese wives, the remainder are single men. They cultivate but small portions of land, which they bring under a high state of improvement. They raise chiefly sugar-cane, pepper, and tobacco. The soil, being a rich loam, is well adapted to the culture of these articles, as well as of a great variety of horticultural plants.

"We have continued our surveys to the southeast of this place, and visited Plieoo, a settlement south of Nung Boah. We left our boat at Barn-Chowkow, which is a settlement of Siamese, consisting of about sixty families living in a very rural, and, for a Siamese, a very comfortable style, in the midst of groves of cocoanuts, interspersed with many a venerable jungle-tree. On either side of a gentle elevation on which their houses are scattered along a line of half a mile, are rice-fields far surpassing in excellence any I had before seen. The grain was nearly all out, and a large proportion of it gathered. They need no barns, and therefore have none. At this season of the year they have no rains to trouble them. The rice is threshed by buffaloes. All the preparation that is necessary for this is to smooth and harden a circle of ground 30 feet in diameter, and set a post in its centre. Siamese carts have wheels not less than twenty-five feet in circumference, set four or five feet apart, with a small rack in

which the sheaves are placed. These are drawn by a yoke of buffaloes. The person who loads the cart guides the team by means of ropes, which are fastened to the septum of their nostrils by hooks.

"At Plicoo we first went into a blacksmith's shop, where four Chinamen were employed. The master was very polite and did all he could think of to make us comfortable. He prepared his couch for us to rest upon, got us a cup of tea, etc. We gave him one of the histories of Christ, for which he was abundantly thankful. We next went to the market, where we disposed of a few books. Entering into the house of a Chinaman, we were surprised to find three Siamese priests. The master of the house had prepared a very neat dinner for one of his clerical guests, and was just in the act of sitting down on the floor to eat, as we entered. There was a frown on his brow as he saw us approach. Although he could read, he utterly refused to receive a tract. Being much in want of some refreshment, I proposed that he should let me have a dish of rice. He refused. I still pleaded for a little, but he was determined that I should not be fed from the same table with his priest. After a little time we returned to our good friend the blacksmith, and merely suggested to him our want of food. The aged, hospitable man seemed very happy that he could have an opportunity to render us such kindness and hastened to prepare us a dinner. He went himself to market and purchased a variety of articles for our comfort. The table was soon well supplied with rice, eggs, greens, and various nameless Chinese nick-nacks.

"In the village of Plieoo there are only a few hundred souls, who are mostly Tachu-Chinese, and cannot read. Their wives are Siamese. We conclude, from what we were able to learn, that the vicinity is densely populated."

The voyage back to Bangkok was comfortably made in a small junk furnished by Luang Nai Sit, and in company with his brother-in-law, an agreeable and intelligent Siamese. Dr. Bradley continues:

"We have in tow an elegant boat, designed probably for some one of the nobles at Bangkok. It was manufactured at Semetgaan. The Siamese possess superior skill in making these boats. They have the very best materials the world can afford for such purposes. The boats consist generally of but one piece.

"A large tree is taken and scooped out in the form of a trough. By some process, I know not what, the sides are then sprung outward, which draws the extremities into a beautiful curve upward. After this is done the boat is admirably wrought and trimmed. The one we have in tow is about sixty feet in length and five in breadth. Compared with many it is quite small. I have seen not a few that were nearly a hundred feet long and from six to eight feet wide, made in the way I have above described.

"[Not long after the above was written, the writer learned that these boats are swelled out in their midships by means of fire, and that the curves of their bows and sterns are increased by means of pieces of the same kind of timber so neatly fitted and firmly joined as to appear on a distant examination to be a continuation of the body of the boat.]

"On the morning of December 16th we were passing between Koh Samet and Sem Yah. After we passed this our course lay west-northwest to another cape called Sah Wa Larn. The wind was favorable but light, and we were becalmed in the heat of the day four hours or more. The heat was excessively oppressive. No shade on deck and my cabin a small place, not large enough to admit of my standing upright. Our vessel has been rowed much of the afternoon for the want of wind. Cast anchor just at evening a little east of Sah Wa Larn, having made less than twenty miles during the day. The coast about Lem Sing is very picturesque. West of this, till you come to Sah Wa Larn, it is uniformly level. The land appears to be entirely uncultivated. The forests are composed of large timber, their tops presenting a very uniform surface. I have much cause for gratitude to God that I find in my companion, Soot Chin Dah, a very attentive friend. He is desirous to render me all the assistance he can in acquiring the Siamese language, in which I hope I am making some proficiency by engaging with him in conversation.

"The scene between Koh Arat and Koh Yai, in the midst of which we were at anchor the next morning, is most charming. The distance from one to the other is about one mile. Arat is a small island rising very abruptly many hundred feet above the sea. At the top is a rock of a conical form, which seems on the point of rolling down with a tremendous crash into the sea. Koh Yai is a much larger island, and hence its name. A little before us was

the cape Samaasarn, shielded against the sea by immense white rocks. Just as the sun was rising Soot Chin Dah invited me to accompany him to Koh Yai for a morning exercise. Our fine boat was manned with nineteen men, and we went off in princely style. We coasted some distance and then landed; whence we walked a long way, first on a sandy beach and then among rocks composed of marine shells interlaid with coral and shells of infinite variety. The land was all one unbroken jungle. Much of the small timber was of a thorny kind, which seemed to bid defiance to human invasion. Our men were chiefly engaged in picking up shells suitable for gambling purposes. On our return we touched at Arat, where I amused myself a little time in climbing around craggy and stupendous rocks. After two hours we returned to our junk well prepared for breakfast. The hired cook, which Luang Nai Sit had the goodness to provide for me, had my food all ready, consisting of a broiled chicken, salt and fresh eggs, and rice with tea. Soot Chin Dah eats by himself, sometimes in one place and sometimes in another. His food is very neatly served for him in a circular wooden tray. It is prepared by a Portuguese cook, and served by his inferior brother. When he is done eating, his brother, serang, assistant serang, and cook eat of the remainder, sitting on the deck. They use neither knife, fork, nor spoon, their fingers serving the purposes of these instruments. The helmsman and his mate, who are masters of the junk, and country-born Portuguese, eat by themselves in the style of the Siamese. The

crew clan together in eating according to their nameless distinctions. Their main dependence is rice and fish. The former they eat out of the bark of a plantain tree rolled up at the sides and one end in the shape of a scoop shovel, or out of a most filthy-looking basket or cocoanut shell. There are three females on board who eat in the hold, where they remain almost constantly from morning to night. In the evening they come out to enjoy the fresh air, and have a most voluble chat with the men.

"About noon we anchored close to the shore of Sem Poo Chow, which is an abrupt and lofty promontory. Here three wild hogs made their appearance. Having looked upon us a few minutes they disappeared. It seemed wonderful that they could inhabit such a bluff, for a misstep would plunge them into the abyss below.

"On the evening of the 19th our captain ordered the anchor to be dropped, as we were on the bar at the mouth of the Meinam River, eight or ten miles from Paknam. We have had a good view of every mile of the coast along which we have passed to-day, and I may with but little qualification say the same of all the coast between this and Chantaboun. The coast north of Bangplasoi is low, without so much as a rock or hill to break the evenness of the jungle. We saw distinctly the entrance of Bangpakong River, its mouth appearing as large as that of the Meinam. I have spent much of this day in finishing charts of Chantaboun and the coast from thence to Paknam."

## CHAPTER XII.

### CHANTABOUN AND THE GULF.

SINCE the date of the missionary journey recorded in the last chapter Chantaboun has become a place of considerable commercial importance, being now the second port in the kingdom, noted for its ship-building and fisheries and carrying on an active export trade from Cambodia and the south-eastern provinces. The government regards the place as one of its chief cities, and has fortified the port at great expense. The prosperity and value of this province have improved since Mouhot's time, an account of whose visit there will afford an idea of its physical features and life.

M. Mouhot, it should be explained by way of introduction, was one of the most competent and gifted explorers of modern times. A Frenchman by birth, he became allied by his marriage with an Englishwoman to the family of Mungo Park, the famous African explorer. He was a faithful student of natural science, devoting himself especially to ornithology and conchology. While still a young man he travelled extensively in Russia, and there learned to speak both Russian and Polish. He was a good draughtsman and a practical photographer of large and varied experience; but more than all he was pos-

sessed of an adventurous and enthusiastic spirit, which welcomed danger when it came in the pursuit of scientific data, and which, together with his great bodily strength and physical constitution, especially fitted him for the life of an explorer. Mouhot's own creed was Protestant, but he was a man of such amiability and broad sympathies as to win the cordial affection of both Protestant and Catholic missionaries in the regions where he travelled. He was a man of devout and religious heart, and almost the last words of his journal, written while he was dying in the jungles of Laos, breathe a spirit of Christian faith and reliance on the love of God. His loss in the prime of manhood was severely felt by the scientific world as well as by those who were bound to him by ties of kinship or of personal acquaintance.

The following are Mouhot's experiences at Chantaboun and among the islands of the gulf:

"My intention now was to visit Cambodia, but for this my little river boat was of no use. The only way of going to Chantaboun was by embarking in one of the small Chinese junks or fishing vessels, which I accordingly did on the 28th of December, taking with me a new servant, called Niou, a native of Annam, and who, having been brought up at the college of the Catholic priests at Bangkok, knew French well enough to be very useful to me as an interpreter. The boat was inconveniently small, and we were far from comfortable; for, besides myself and servant, there were on board two men and two children about thirteen. I was much pleased with the picturesque aspect of all the little islands in the gulf; but our voyage

was far longer than we expected, three days being its usual duration, while, owing to a strong head-wind, it occupied us for eight. We met with an accident which was fatal to one of our party, and might have been so to all of us. On the night of the 31st of December our boat was making rapid way under the influence of a violent wind. I was seated on the little roof of leaves and interlaced bamboo which formed a sort of protection to me against the rain and cold night air, bidding adieu to the departing year, and welcoming in the new; praying that it might be a fortunate one for me, and, above all, that it might be full of blessings for all those dear to me. The night was dark; we were about two miles from land, and the mountains loomed black in the distance. The sea alone was brilliant with that phosphoric light so familiar to all voyagers on the deep. For a couple of hours we had been followed by two sharks, who left behind them a luminous and waving track. All was silent in our boat; nothing was to be heard but the wind whistling among the rigging and the rushing of the waves: and I felt at that midnight hour—alone, and far from all I loved—a sadness which I vainly tried to shake off, and a disquietude which I could not account for. Suddenly we felt a violent shock, immediately followed by a second, and then the vessel remained stationary. Every one cried out in alarm; the sailors rushed forward; in a moment the sail was furled and torches lighted, but, sad to say, one of our number did not answer to his name. One of the young boys, who had been asleep on deck, had been thrown into the sea by the shock. Uselessly we looked for the poor lad,

whose body doubtless became the prey of the sharks. Fortunately for us, only one side of the boat had touched the rock, and it had then run aground on the sand; so that after getting it off we were able to anchor not far from the shore.

"On the 3d January, 1859, after having crossed the little gulf of Chantaboun, the sea being at the time very rough, we came in sight of the famous Lion Rock, which stands out like the extremity of a cape at the entrance of this port. From a distance it resembles a lion couchant, and it is difficult to believe that Nature unassisted has formed this singular colossus. The Siamese—a superstitious race—hold this stone in great veneration, as they do everything that appears to them extraordinary or marvellous. It is said that the captain of an English ship, once anchored in the port, seeing the lion, proposed to buy it, and that, on the governor of the place refusing the offer, he pitilessly fired all his guns at *the poor animal*. This has been recorded in Siamese verse, with a touching complaint against the cruelty of the Western barbarians.

"On the 4th January, at eight o'clock in the morning, we arrived at the town of Chantaboun, which stands on the bank of the river, six or seven miles from the mountain range. The Christian Annamites form nearly a third of the population, the remainder being composed of Chinese merchants, and some heathen Annamites and Siamese. The Annamites are all fishers, who originally came from Cochin-China to fish in the northern part of the Gulf of Siam, and settled at the Chantaboun. Every

day, while the cold weather lasts, and the sea is not too rough, they cast their nets in the little bays on the coast, or in the sheltered water among the islands.

"The commerce of this province is inconsiderable, compared with what it might be from its situation; but the numerous taxes, the grinding exactions of the chiefs, and the usury of the mandarins, added to the hateful system of slavery, keep the bulk of the people in a ruinous state of prostration. However, in spite of a scanty population, they manage to export to Bangkok a great quantity of pepper, chiefly cultivated by the Chinese at the foot of the mountains; a little sugar and coffee of superior quality; mats made of rushes, which meet with a ready sale in China; tobacco, great quantities of salted and dried fish, dried leeches, and tortoise-shell. Every Siamese subject, on attaining a certain height, has to pay to government an impost or annual tribute equivalent to six ticals (eighteen francs). The Annamites of Chantaboun pay this in eagle-wood, and the Siamese in gamboge; the Chinese in gum-lac, every four years, and their tribute amounts to four ticals. At the close of the rainy season, the Annamite Christians unite in parties of fifteen or twenty, and set out under the conduct of an experienced man, who heads the expedition, and indicates to the others the trees which contain the eagle-wood, for all are not equally skilled in distinguishing those which produce it. A degree of experience is requisite for this, which can only be acquired by time, and thus much useless and painful

labor is avoided. Some remain in the mountains, others visit the large islands of Ko-Xang or Ko-Khut, situated southeast of Chantaboun. The eagle-wood is hard and speckled, and diffuses a powerful aromatic odor when burnt. It is used at the incremation of the bodies of princes and high dignitaries, which are previously kept in the coffins for a twelvemonth. The Siamese also employ it as a medicine. The wood of the tree which yields it—the *Aquilara Agallocha* of Roxburgh—is white and very soft; and the trunk must be cut down, or split in two, to find the eagle-wood, which is in the interior. The Annamites make a kind of secret of the indications by which they fix upon the right trees, but the few instructions given me put me on the right track. I had several cut down, and the result of my observations was, that this substance is formed in the cavities of the trees, and that as they grow older it increases in quantity. Its presence may be pretty surely ascertained by the peculiar odor emitted, and the hollow sound given out on striking the trunk.

"Most of the Chinese merchants are addicted to gambling and to the use of opium; but the Annamite Christians are better conducted. The nature of these Annamites is very different from that of the Siamese, who are an effeminate and indolent race, but liberal and hospitable, simple-minded, and without pride. The Annamites are short in stature, and thin, lively, and active; they are choleric and vindictive, and extremely proud; even among relations there is continual strife and jealousy. The poor and the wretched meet with no commiseration,

but great respect is accorded to wealth. However, the attachment of the Christians to their priests and missionaries is very great, and they do not hesitate to expose themselves to any dangers in their behalf. I must likewise own that, in all my dealings with the pagan Annamites, whose reverence for their ancestors induces them to hold fast their idolatry, I experienced generosity and kindness from them, both at Chantaboun and in the islands.

"The missionaries at Bangkok having given me a letter of introduction to their fellow-laborer at Chantaboun, I had the pleasure of making acquaintance with the worthy man, who received me with great cordiality, and placed at my disposal a room in his modest habitation. The good father has resided for more than twenty years at Chantaboun, with the Annamites whom he has baptized, content and happy amid indigence and solitude. I found him, on my arrival, at the height of felicity; a new brick chapel, which had been for some time in course of construction, and the funds required for which had been saved out of his modest income, was rapidly progressing, and promised soon to replace the wooden building in which he then officiated. I passed sixteen days very agreeably with him, sometimes hunting on Mount Sabab, at other times making excursions on the rivers and canals. The country greatly resembles the province of Pakpriau, the plain being, perhaps, still more desert and uncultivated; but at the foot of the mountains, and in some of the delightful valleys, pepper is grown in some quantity by the Chinese.

"I bought for twenty-five ticals a small boat to enable me to visit the isles of the gulf. The first I landed at was named Konam-sao; it is in the form of a cone, and nearly two hundred and fifty metres * in height, but only two miles in circumference. Like all the other islands in this part of the gulf, it is of volcanic origin. The rocks which surround it make the access difficult; but the effect produced by the richness and bright green of the vegetation is charming. The dry season, so agreeable for European travelling, from the freshness of the nights and mornings, is in Siam a time of stagnation and death for all nature; the birds fly to the neighborhood of houses, or to the banks of the rivers, which furnish them with nourishment; rarely does their song come to enchant the listener; and the fishing-eagle alone utters his hoarse and piercing cry every time the wind changes. Ants swarm everywhere, and appear to be, with the mosquitoes and crickets, the only insects that have escaped destruction.

"Nowhere did I find in these islands the slightest trace of path or stream; and it was extremely difficult to advance at all through the masses of wild vines and interwoven branches. I was forced to make my way, hatchet in hand, and returned at night exhausted with the heat and fatigue.

"The greater portion of the rocks in the elevated parts of these islands is elementary and preserves traces of their ancient deposit beneath the waters. They have, however, undergone considerable volcanic changes, and contain a number of veins and irregular

* A metre is equivalent to 3 feet 3⅜ inches.

deposits of the class known as contact deposits, that are formed near the junction of stratified rocks with intruded igneous masses.

"On the 26th we set sail for the first of the Ko-Man Islands, for there are three, situated close together, bearing this name. The largest is only twelve miles from the coast. Some fishing-eagles, a few black doves, and a kind of white pigeon were the only winged creatures I saw. Iguanas are numerous, and when in the evening they come out of their retreats, they make such a noise in walking heavily over the dead leaves and branches that one might suppose it caused by animals of a much larger size.

"Toward evening, the tide having fallen, I allowed my boat to ground on the mud, which I had remarked during the day to be like a peat-bog impregnated with volcanic matter; and during the whole night so strong a sulphurous odor escaped from it that I imagined myself to be over a submarine volcano.

"On the 28th we passed on to the second island, which is higher and more picturesque than the other. The rocks which surround it give it a magnificent effect, especially in a bright sunlight, when the tide is low. The isles of the Patates owe their name to the numerous wild tubers found there.

"I passed several days at Cape Liaut, part of the time being occupied in exploring the many adjacent islands. It is the most exquisite part of the gulf, and will bear comparison, for its beauty, with the Strait of Sunda, near the coast of Java. Two years ago, when the king visited Chantaboun, they built for him on the shore, at the extremity of the cape, a

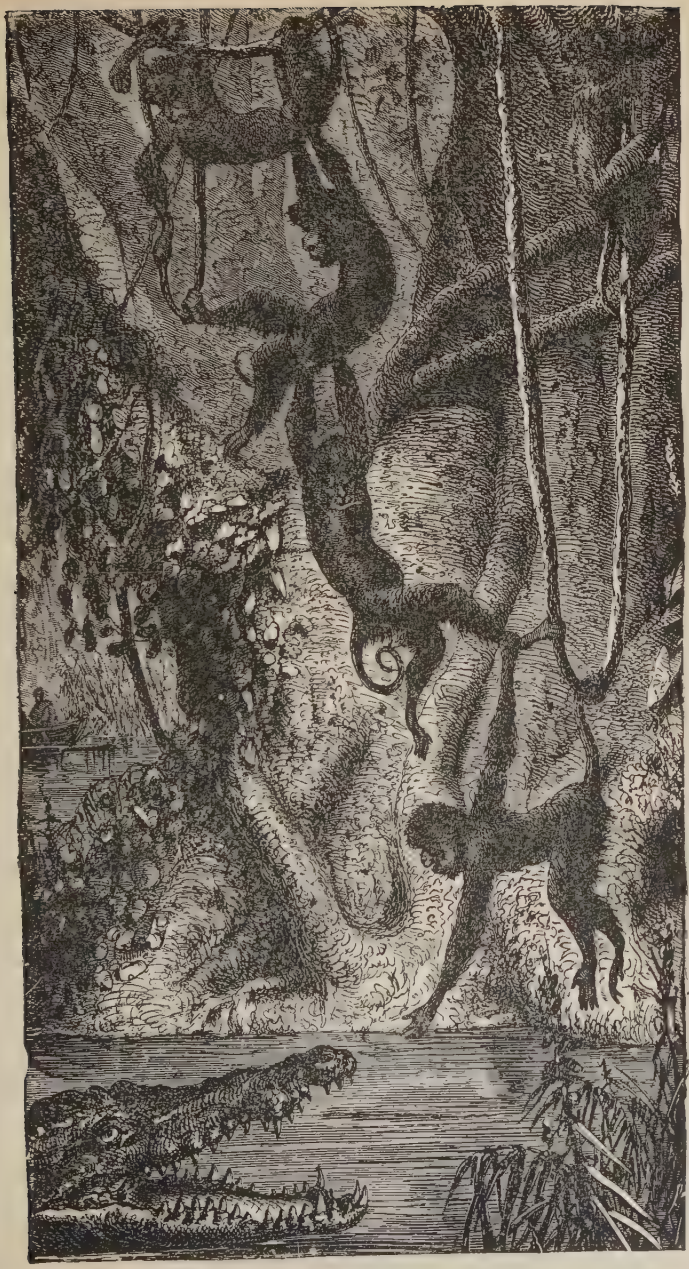
house and kiosk, and, in memory of that event, they also erected on the top of the mountain a small tower, from which a very extensive view may be enjoyed.

"I also made acquaintance with Ko-Kram, the most beautiful and the largest of all the islands north of the gulf between Bangkok and Chantaboun. The whole island consists of a wooded mountain-range, easy of access, and containing much oligist iron. On the morning of the 29th, at sunrise, the breeze lessened, and when we were about three miles from the strait which separates the Isle of Arec from that of the 'Cerfs' it ceased altogether. For the last half hour we were indebted solely to our oars for the little progress made, being exposed to all the glare of a burning sun; and the atmosphere was heavy and suffocating. All of a sudden, to my great astonishment, the water began to be agitated, and our light boat was tossed about by the waves. I knew not what to think, and was seriously alarmed, when our pilot called out, 'Look how the sea boils!' Turning in the direction indicated, I beheld the sea really in a state of ebullition, and very shortly afterward an immense jet of water and steam, which lasted for several minutes, was thrown into the air. I had never before witnessed such a phenomenon, and was now no longer astonished at the powerful smell of sulphur which had nearly overpowered me in Ko-Man. It was really a submarine volcano, which burst out, more than a mile from the place where we had anchored three days before.

"On March 1st we reached Ven-Ven, at Pack-

nam-Ven, the name of the place where the branches of the river unite. This river, whose width at the mouth is above three miles, is formed by the union of several streams flowing from the mountains, as well as by an auxiliary of the Chantaboun River, which, serving as a canal, unites these two places. Ascending the stream for fourteen or fifteen miles, a large village is reached, called Bandiana, but Paknam-Ven is only inhabited by five families of Chinese fishermen.

"Crocodiles are more numerous in the river at Paknam-Ven than in that at Chantaboun. I continually saw them throw themselves from the banks into the water; and it has frequently happened that careless fishers, or persons who have imprudently fallen asleep on the shore, have become their prey, or have afterward died of the wounds inflicted by them. This latter has happened twice during my stay here. It is amusing, however—for one is interested in observing the habits of animals all over the world—to see the manner in which these creatures catch the apes, which sometimes take a fancy to play with them. Close to the bank lies the crocodile, his body in the water, and only his capacious mouth above the surface, ready to seize anything that may come within reach. A troop of apes catch sight of him, seem to consult together, approach little by little, and commence their frolics, by turns actors and spectators. One of the most active or most impudent jumps from branch to branch, till within a respectful distance of the crocodile, when, hanging by one claw, and with the dexterity peculiar to these animals, he advances



and retires, now giving his enemy a blow with his paw, at another time only pretending to do so. The other apes, enjoying the fun, evidently wish to take a part in it; but the other branches being too high, they form a sort of chain by laying hold of each other's paws, and thus swing backward and forward, while any one of them who comes within reach of the crocodile torments him to the best of his ability. Sometimes the terrible jaws suddenly close, but not upon the audacious ape, who just escapes; then there are cries of exultation from the tormentors, who gambol about joyfully. Occasionally, however, the claw is entrapped, and the victim dragged with the rapidity of lightning beneath the water, when the whole troop disperse, groaning and shrieking. The misadventure does not, however, prevent their recommencing the game a few days afterward.

"On the 4th I returned to Chantaboun from my excursions in the gulf, and resumed charge of my collections, which, during my absence, I had left at the custom-house, and which, to my great satisfaction, had been taken good care of. The tide was low, and we could not go up to the town. The sea here is steadily receding from the coast, and, if some remedy be not found, in a few years the river will not be navigable even for boats. Already the junks have some trouble in reaching Chantaboun even at high water. The inhabitants were fishing for crabs and mussels on the sand-banks, close to the custom-house, the *employés* in which were occupied in the same pursuit. The chief official, who, probably hoping for some small present, had come out to meet me,

heard me promise a supply of pins and needles to those who would bring me shells, and encouraged his men to look for them. In consequence, a large number were brought me, which, to obtain otherwise, would have cost much time and trouble.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### MOUHOT IN THE HILL-COUNTRY OF CHANTABOUN.

"HERE I am," continues Mouhot, in his narrative, "once more installed in the house of a good old Chinese, a pepper-planter, whose hospitality I enjoyed on my first visit to the place, two months ago. His name is Ihié-How, but in Siamese he is called Apait, which means *uncle*. He is a widower, with two sons, the eldest eighteen, a good young man, lively, hard-working, brave, and persevering. He is already much attached to me, and is desirous of accompanying me to Cambodia. Born amid the mountains, and naturally intelligent, there are none of the quadrupeds and few of the feathered tribes found in the district with whose habits he is not familiar. He fears neither tiger nor elephant. All this, added to his amiable disposition, made Phrai (that is his name) a real treasure to me.

"Apait has also two brothers who have become Catholics, and have settled at Chantaboun in order to be near a Christian place of worship. He himself has never had any desire to change his religion, because he says if he did he must forget his deceased parents, for whom he frequently offers sacrifices. He is badly off, having incurred a debt of fifty ticals,

for which he has to pay ten as yearly interest, the rate in Siam being always twenty or thirty per cent. Besides this he has various taxes to pay—twelve ticals for his two sons, four for his house, one for his furnace, one for his pig. The tax on the pepper-field is eight ticals, one on his areca-trees, one on the betel cultivated by him, and two *sellungs* for a cocoa-tree; altogether thirty-nine ticals. His land brings him in forty after all expenses are paid; what can he do with the one remaining tical? The unlucky agriculturists of this kind, and they are many, live on vegetables, and on the rice which they obtain from the Siamese in exchange for areca.

"On my return from the islands, I had been detained nearly ten days at Chantaboun, unable to walk; I had cut my heel in climbing the rocks on the shore at Ko-Man, and, as I was constantly barefooted in the salt water, the wound soon closed. But afterward I began to suffer from it; my foot swelled, and I was obliged to reopen the wound to extract a piece of shell which had remained in it. As soon as I could leave Chantaboun I hired a carriage and two buffaloes to take me to the mountain. I experienced much gratification in finding myself again among these quiet scenes, at once so lovely and so full of grandeur. Here are valleys intersected by streams of pure and limpid water; there, small plains, over which are scattered the modest dwellings of the laborious Chinese; while a little in the distance rises the mountain, with its imposing rocks, its grand trees, its torrents, and waterfalls.

"We have already had some storms, for the rainy season is approaching, vegetation is fresh, and nature animated; the song of birds and the hum of insects are heard all around. Apait has resigned to me his bed, if that can be so styled, which consists merely of a few laths of areca placed upon four stakes. I have extended my mat upon this framework, and should enjoy uninterrupted sleep all night were it not for the swarms of ants which frequently disturb me by passing over my body, getting under my clothes and into my beard, and, I almost fancy, would end by dragging me out if I did not from time to time shake them off. Occasionally great spiders and other disgusting creatures, crawling about under the roof, would startle me by dropping suddenly on my face.

"The heat now is quite endurable, the thermometer generally marking 80° Fahr. in the morning and 90° in the middle of the day. The water of the streams is so cool and refreshing that a good morning and evening ablution makes me comfortable for several hours, as well as contributing to keep me in health.

"Last evening Phrai, having gone along with my man Fiou to Chantaboun to buy provisions, brought back to his father some Chinese bonbons, for which he had paid half a fuang. The poor old man was delighted with them, and this morning at daybreak he dressed himself in his best clothes, on which I asked him what was going to happen. He immediately began to clean a plank which was fitted into the wall to serve as a sort of table or altar. Above

this was a drawing of a man dancing and putting out his tongue, with claws on his feet and hands, and with the tail of an ape, intended to represent his father. He then filled three small cups with tea, put the bonbons in a fourth, and placed the whole upon the simple altar; finally, lighting two pieces of odoriferous wood, he began his devotions. It was a sacrifice to the manes of his parents, performed with the hope that their souls would come and taste the good things set before them.

"At the entrance of Apait's garden, in front of his house, I had made a kind of shed with stakes and branches of trees, covered with a roof of leaves, where I dried and prepared my large specimens, such as the long-armed apes, kids, and hornbills, as also my collections of insects. All this has attracted a crowd of inquisitive Siamese and Chinamen, who came to see the "farang" and admire his curiosities. We have just passed the Chinese New Year's-day, and, as there has been a *fête* for three days, all those living at any distance have profited by the opportunity to visit us. At times Apait's house and garden have been crowded with people in their holiday dresses, many of whom, seeing my instruments, my naturalist's case, and different preparations, took me for a great doctor, and begged for medicines.

"Alas! my pretensions are not so high; however, I treat them on the 'Raspail' system; and a little box of pomade or phial of sedative water will perhaps be represented in some European museum by an insect or shell brought to me by these worthy people in return for the good I would gladly do them.

"It is very agreeable, after a fatiguing day's chase over hills and amongst dense forests, through which one must cut one's way, axe in hand, to repose in the evening on the good Chinaman's bench in front of his house, shaded by banana, cocoanut, and other trees. For the last four days a violent north wind, fresh in spite of the season, has been blowing without intermission, breaking asunder and tearing up by the roots some of the trees on the higher grounds. This is its farewell visit, for the southeast wind will now blow for many months.

"This evening everything appeared to me more beautiful and agreeable than usual; the stars shone brightly in the sky, the moon was clear. Sitting by Apait while his son played to me some Chinese airs on the bamboo flute, I thought to what a height of prosperity this province, even now one of the most interesting and flourishing in the country, might attain, were it wisely and intelligently governed, or if European colonists were to settle and develop its resources. Proximity to the sea, facility of communication, a rich soil, a healthy and propitious climate; nothing is wanted to ensure success to an industrious and enterprising agriculturist.

"The worthy old Apait has at last consented to allow his son to enter my service, providing I pay him thirty ticals, half a year's wages, in advance. This will enable him, if he can sell his house and pepperfield, to clear off his debt and retire to another part of the mountain. Phrai is delighted to attend me, and to run about the woods all day, and I am not less pleased with our bargain, for his knowledge of the

country, his activity, his intelligence, and attachment to me, are invaluable.

"The heat becomes greater and greater, the thermometer having risen to 102° Fahr. in the shade: thus hunting is now a painful, and sometimes impossible, exertion, anywhere except in the woods. A few days ago I took advantage of a short spell of cloudy and consequently cooler weather to visit a waterfall I had heard of in the almost desert district of Prion, twelve miles from Kombau. After reaching the last-named place our course lay for about an hour and a half along a charming valley, nearly as smooth as a lawn and as ornamental as a park. By and by, entering a forest, we kept by the banks of a stream, which, shut in between two mountains, and studded with blocks of granite, increases in size as you approach its source. Before long we arrived at the fall, which must be a fine spectacle in the rainy season. It then pours down from immense perpendicular rocks, forming, as it were, a circular peaked wall, nearly thirty metres in diameter and twenty metres in height. The force of the torrent having been broken by the rocky bed into which it descends, there is another fall of ten feet; and lower down, after a third fall of fifteen feet, it passes into an ample basin, which, like a mirror, reflects the trees and cliffs around. Even during the dry season, the spring, then running from beneath enormous blocks of granite, flows in such abundance as to feed several streams.

"I was astonished to see my two servants, heated by their long walk, bathe in the cold water, and on

my advising them to wait for a little, they replied that the natives were always accustomed to bathe when hot.

"We all turned stone-cutters, that is to say, we set to work to detach the impression of an unknown animal from the surface of an immense mass of granite rising up out of one of the mountain torrents. A Chinese had in January demanded so exorbitant a sum for this that I had abandoned the idea, intending to content myself with an impression in wax, but Phrai proposed to me to undertake the work, and by our joint labor it was soon accomplished. The Siamese do not much like my meddling with their rocks, and their superstition is also somewhat startled when I happen to kill a white ape, although when the animal is dead and skinned they are glad to obtain a cutlet or steak from it, for they attribute to the flesh of this creature great medicinal virtues.

"The rainy season is drawing near; storms become more and more frequent, and the growling of the thunder is frightful. Insects are in greater numbers, and the ants, which are now looking out for a shelter, invade the dwellings, and are a perfect pest to my collections, not to speak of myself and my clothes. Several of my books and maps have been almost devoured in one night. Fortunately there are no mosquitoes, but to make up for this there is a small species of leech, which, when it rains, quits the streams and infests the woods, rendering an excursion there, if not impracticable, at all events very disagreeable. You have constantly to be

pulling them off you by dozens, but, as some always escape observation, you are sure to return home covered with blood; often my white trousers are dyed as red as those of a French soldier.

"The animals have now become scarcer, which in different ways is a great disappointment to all, for Phrai and Niou feasted sumptuously on the flesh of the apes, and made a profit by selling their gall to the Chinese doctors in Chantaboun. Hornbills have also turned wild, so we can find nothing to replenish our larder but an occasional kid. Large stags feed on the mountain, but one requires to watch all night to get within range of them. There are not many birds to be seen, neither quail, partridges, nor pheasants; and the few wild fowl which occasionally make their appearance are so difficult to shoot that it is waste both of time and ammunition to make the attempt.

"In this part of the country the Siamese declare they cannot cultivate bananas on account of the elephants, which at certain times come down from the mountains and devour the leaves, of which they are very fond. The royal and other tigers abound here; every night they prowl about in the vicinity of the houses, and in the mornings we can see the print of their large claws in the sand and in the clay near streams. By day they retire to the mountain, where they lurk in close and inaccessible thickets. Now and then you may get near enough to one to have a shot at him, but generally, unless suffering from hunger, they fly at the approach of man. A few days ago I saw a young Chinese who had nineteen wounds on his body, made by one of these animals. He was looking

out from a tree about nine feet high when the cries of a young kid tied to another tree at a short distance, attracted a large tiger. The young man fired at it, but, though mortally wounded, the creature, collecting all his strength for a final spring, leaped on his enemy, seized him and pulled him down, tearing his flesh frightfully with teeth and claws as they rolled on the ground. Luckily for the unfortunate Chinese, it was a dying effort, and in a few moments more the tiger relaxed its hold and breathed its last.

"In the mountains of Chantaboun, and not far from my present abode, precious stones of fine water occur. There is even at the east of the town an eminence, which they call 'the mountain of precious stones;' and it would appear from the account of Mgr. Pallegoix that at one time they were abundant in that locality, since in about half an hour he picked up a handful, which is as much as now can be found in a twelvemonth, nor can they be purchased at any price.

"It seems that I have seriously offended the poor Thai* of Kombau by carrying away the footprints. I have met several natives who tell me they have broken arms, that they can no longer work, and will always henceforth be in poverty; and I find that I am considered to be answerable for this because I irritated the genius of the mountain. Henceforth they will have a good excuse for idleness.

"The Chinese have equally amused me. They imagine that some treasure ought to be found beneath the footprints, and that the block which I have

* The Siamese call themselves Thai.

carried away must possess great medicinal virtues; so Apait and his friends have been rubbing the under part of the stone every morning against another piece of granite, and, collecting carefully the dust that fell from it, have mixed it with water and drunk it fasting, fully persuaded that it is a remedy against all ills. Here they say that it is faith which cures; and it is certain that pills are often enough administered in the civilized West which have no more virtue than the granite powder swallowed by old Apait.

"His uncle Thié-ou has disposed of his property for him for sixty ticals, so that, after paying off his debts, he will have left, including the sum I gave him for his son's services, forty ticals. Here that is enough to make a man think himself rich to the end of his days; he can at times regale the souls of his parents with tea and bonbons, and live himself like a true country mandarin. Before leaving Kombau the old man secured me another lodging, for which I had to pay two ticals (six francs) a month, and I lost nothing in point of comfort by the change. For 'furnished apartments' I think the charge not unreasonable. The list of furniture is as follows: in the dining-room *nothing*, in the bedroom an old mat on a camp-bed. However, this house is cleaner and larger than the other, and better protected from the weather; in the first the water came in in all directions. Then the camp-bed, which is a large one, affords a pleasant lounge after my hunting expeditions. Besides which advantages my new landlord furnishes me with bananas and vegetables, for which I pay in game when the chase has been successful.

"The fruit here is exquisite, particularly the mango, the mangosteen, the pineapple, so fragrant and melting in the mouth, and, what is superior to anything I ever imagined or tasted, the famous 'durian' or 'dourion,' which justly merits the title of king of fruits. But to enjoy it thoroughly one must have time to overcome the disgust at first inspired by its smell, which is so strong that I could not stay in the same place with it. On first tasting it I thought it like the flesh of some animal in a state of putrefaction, but after four or five trials I found the aroma exquisite. The *durian* is about two-thirds the size of a jacca, and like it is encased in a thick and prickly rind, which protects it from the teeth of squirrels and other nibblers; on opening it there are to be found ten cells, each containing a kernel larger than a date, and surrounded by a sort of white, or sometimes yellowish, cream, which is most delicious. By an odd freak of nature, not only is there the first repugnance to it to overcome, but if you eat it often, though with ever so great moderation, you find yourself next day covered with blotches, as if attacked with measles, so heating is its nature. A *durian* picked is never good, for when fully ripe it falls off itself; when cut open it must be eaten at once, as it quickly spoils, but otherwise it will keep for three days. At Bangkok one of them costs one *sellung;* at Chantaboun nine may be obtained for the same sum.

"I had come to the conclusion that there was little danger in traversing the woods here, and in our search for butterflies and other insects, we often took no other arms than a hatchet and hunting-knife,

while Niou had become so confident as to go by night with Phrai to lie in wait for stags. Our sense of security was, however, rudely shaken when one evening a panther rushed upon one of the dogs close to my door. The poor animal uttered a heart-rending cry, which brought us all out, as well as our neighbors, each torch in hand. Finding themselves face to face with a panther, they in their turn raised their voices in loud screams; but it was too late for me to get my gun, for in a moment the beast was out of reach.

"In a few weeks I must say farewell to these beautiful mountains, never, in all probability, to see them again, and I think of this with regret; I have been so happy here, and have so much enjoyed my hunting and my solitary walks in this comparatively temperate climate, after my sufferings from the heat and mosquitoes in my journey northward.

"Thanks to my nearness to the sea on the one side, and to the mountain region on the other, the period of the greatest heat passed away without my perceiving it; and I was much surprised at receiving a few days ago a letter from Bangkok which stated that it had been hotter weather there than had been known for more than thirty years. Many of the European residents had been ill; yet I do not think the climate of Bangkok more unhealthy than that of other towns of eastern Asia within the tropics. But no doubt the want of exercise, which is there almost impossible, induces illness in many cases.

"A few days ago I made up my mind to penetrate into a grotto on Mount Sabab, half-way between Chantaboun and Kombau, so deep, I am told, that it

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extends to the top of the mountain. I set out, accompanied by Phrai and Niou, furnished with all that was necessary for our excursion. On reaching the grotto we lighted our torches, and, after scaling a number of blocks of granite, began our march. Thousands of bats, roused by the lights, commenced flying round and round us, flapping our faces with their wings, and extinguishing our torches every minute. Phrai walked first, trying the ground with a lance which he held; but we had scarcely proceeded a hundred paces when he threw himself back upon me with every mark of terror, crying out, 'A serpent! go back!' As he spoke I perceived an enormous boa about fifteen feet off, with erect head and open mouth, ready to dart upon him My gun being loaded, one barrel with two bullets, the other with shot, I took aim and fired off both at once. We were immediately enveloped in a thick cloud of smoke, and could see nothing, but prudently beat an instant retreat. We waited anxiously for some time at the entrance of the grotto, prepared to do battle with our enemy should he present himself; but he did not appear. My guide now boldly lighted a torch, and, furnished with my gun reloaded and a long rope, went in again alone. We held one end of the rope, that at the least signal we might fly to his assistance. For some minutes, which appeared terribly long, our anxiety was extreme, but equally great was our relief and gratification when we saw him approach, drawing after him the rope, to which was attached an immense boa. The head of the reptile had been shattered by my fire, and his death had been instan-

taneous, but we sought to penetrate no farther into the grotto.

"I had been told that the Siamese were about to celebrate a grand *fête* at a pagoda about three miles off, in honor of a superior priest who died last year, and whose remains were now to be burned according to the custom of the country. I went to see this singular ceremony, hoping to gain some information respecting the amusements of this people, and arrived at the place about eight in the morning, the time for breakfast, or 'kinkao' (rice-eating). Nearly two thousand Siamese of both sexes from Chantaboun and the surrounding villages, some in carriages and some on foot, were scattered over the ground in the neighborhood of the pagoda. All wore new sashes and dresses of brilliant colors, and the effect of the various motley groups was most striking.

"Under a vast roof of planks supported by columns, forming a kind of shed, bordered by pieces of stuff covered with grotesque paintings representing men and animals in the most extraordinary attitudes, was constructed an imitation rock of colored pasteboard, on which was placed a catafalque lavishly decorated with gilding and carved work, and containing an urn in which were the precious remains of the priest. Here and there were arranged pieces of paper and stuff in the form of flags. Outside the building was prepared the funeral pile, and at some distance off a platform was erected for the accommodation of a band of musicians, who played upon different instruments of the country. Farther away some women had established a market for the sale of fruit,

bonbons, and arrack, while in another quarter some Chinamen and Siamese were performing, in a little theatre run up for the occasion, scenes something in the style of those exhibited by our strolling actors at fairs. This *fête*, which lasted for three days, had nothing at all in it of a funereal character. I had gone there hoping to witness something new and remarkable, for these peculiar rites are only celebrated in honor of sovereigns, nobles, and other persons of high standing; but I had omitted to take into consideration the likelihood of my being myself an object of curiosity to the crowd. Scarcely, however, had I appeared in the pagoda, followed by Phrai and Niou, when on all sides I heard the exclamation, 'Farang! come and see the farang!' and immediately both Siamese and Chinamen left their bowls of rice and pressed about me. I hoped that, once their curiosity was gratified, they would leave me in peace, but instead of that the crowd grew thicker and thicker, and followed me wherever I went, so that at last it became almost unbearable, and all the more so as most of them were already drunk, either with opium or arrack, many indeed, with both. I quitted the pagoda and was glad to get into the fresh air again, but the respite was of short duration. Passing the entrance of a large hut temporarily built of planks, I saw some chiefs of provinces sitting at breakfast. The senior of the party advanced straight toward me, shook me by the hand, and begged me in a cordial and polite manner to enter; and I was glad to avail myself of his kind offer, and take refuge from the troublesome people. My hosts overwhelmed

me with attentions, and forced upon me pastry, fruit, and bonbons; but the crowd who had followed me forced their way into the building and hemmed us in on all sides; even the roof was covered with gazers. All of a sudden we heard the walls crack, and the whole of the back of the hut, yielding under the pressure, fell in, and people, priests, and chiefs tumbling one upon another, the scene of confusion was irresistibly comic. I profited by the opportunity to escape, swearing—though rather late in the day—that they should not catch me again.

"I know not to what it is to be attributed, unless it be the pure air of the mountains and a more active life, but the mountaineers of Chantaboun appeared a much finer race than the Siamese of the plain, more robust, and of a darker complexion. Their features, also, are more regular, and I should imagine that they sprang rather from the Arian than from the Mongolian race. They remind me of the Siamese and Laotians whom I met with in the mountains of Pakpriau.

"Will the present movement of the nations of Europe toward the East result in good by introducing into these lands the blessings of our civilization? or shall we, as blind instruments of boundless ambition, come hither as a scourge to add to their present miseries? Here are millions of unhappy creatures in great poverty in the midst of the richest and most fertile region imaginable, bowing shamefully under a servile yoke, made viler by despotism and the most barbarous customs, living and dying in utter ignorance of the only true God!

"I quitted with regret these beautiful mountains, where I had passed so many happy hours with the poor but hospitable inhabitants. On the evening before and the morning of my departure, all the people of the neighborhood, Chinese and Siamese, came to say adieu, and offer me presents of fruits, dried fish, fowls, tobacco, and rice cooked in various ways with brown sugar, all in greater quantities than I could possibly carry away. The farewells of these good mountaineers were touching; they kissed my hands and feet, and I confess that my eyes were not dry. They accompanied me to a great distance, begging me not to forget them, and to pay them another visit."

## CHAPTER XIV.

### PECHABURI OR P'RIPP'REE

ON the opposite side of the gulf from Chantaboun, and much nearer to the mouth of the Meinam, within a few hours' sail of Paknam, is the town of Pechaburi, which is now famous as the seat of a summer palace built by the late king, and as a place of increasing resort for foreigners resident in Siam.

The proper orthography of the name of this town was a matter which gave the late king a great deal of solicitude and distress. Priding himself upon his scholarship almost as much as on his sovereignty, his pedantic soul was vexed by the method in which some of the writers for the press had given the name. Accordingly, in a long article published in the Bangkok *Calendar*, he relieved his mind by a protest which is so characteristic, and in its way so amusing, that it will bear to be quoted by way of introduction to the present chapter. He has just finished a long disquisition, philological, historical and antiquarian, concerning the name of the city of Bangkok, and he continues as follows:

"But as the city P'etch'ără-booree the masses of the people in all parts call it P'ripp'ree or P'et-p'ree. The name P'etch'ără-booree is Sanskrit, a royal name

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given to the place the same as T'on-booree, Non-booree, Năk'awn K'u'n k'ăn, Sămŏŏtă-pra-kan, and Ch'ă-chong-sow. Now, if Mahá nak'awn be called Bangkok, and the other names respectively called Tălat-k'wan, Paklat, Paknam, and Păătrew, it is proper that P'etch'ără-booree should follow suit, and be called by her vulgar name P'rip-p'ree, or P'et-p'ree.

"Now that the company of teachers and printers should coin a name purporting to be after the royal style and yet do not take the true Sanskrit, seems not at all proper. In trying to Romanize the name P'etch'ără-booree, they place the mark over the *a* thus P'etchă-booree, making foreigners read it P'etcha-booree, following the utterances of old dunces in the temples, who boast that they know Balăm Bali, and not satisfied with that, they even call the place City P'et, setting forth both the Bali and the meaning of the word; and thus boasting greatly of their knowledge and of being a standard of orthography for the name of that city.

"Now, what is the necessity of coining another name like this? There is no occasion for it. When the name is thus incorrectly printed, persons truly acquainted with Sanskrit and Bali (for such there are many other places) will say that those who write or print the name in the way, must be pupils of ignorant teachers—blind teachers not following the real Sanskrit in full, taking only the utterances of woodsmen, and holding them forth [as the correct way]. In following such sounds they cannot be in accord with the Sanskrit, and they conclude that the name is Siamese. Whereas, in truth, it is not Siamese. The true Siam-

ese name is P'rip-p'ree or P'et-p'ree. It matters not what letters are used to express it—follow your own mind; but let the sound come out clear and accurate either P'rip-p'ree or P'et-p'ree, and it will be true Siamese. But the mode of writing and printing the name P'etchă-booree with the letter *a* and mark over it and other marks in two places, resists the eye and the mouth greatly. Whatever be done in this matter let there be uniformity. If it be determined to follow the vulgar mode of calling the name, let that be followed out fully and accurately; but if the royal mode be preferred let the king be sought unto for the proper way of writing it, which shall be in full accordance with the Sanskrit. And should this happen not to be like the utterance of the people in the temples, the difference cannot be great. And persons unacquainted with Sanskrit will be constrained to acknowledge that you do really know Sanskrit; and comparing the corrected with the improper mode of Romanizing, will praise you for the improvement which you have made. Such persons there are a few, not ignorant and blind leaders and dunces like the inmates of the temples and of the jungles and forests, but learned in the Sanskrit and residents in Siam."

It is to be feared, however, that his majesty's protest came too late, and that, like many another blunder, the name Pechaburi has obtained such currency that it cannot be superseded.

Sir John Bowring "received from a gentleman now resident in Siam the notes of an excursion to this city in July, 1855.

"'We left Bangkok about three in the afternoon,

and although we had the tide in our favor, we only accomplished five miles during the first three hours. Our way lay through a creek; and so great was the number of boats that it strongly reminded me of Cheapside during the busiest part of the day. Although I had been in Bangkok four months, I had not the least conception that there was such a population spread along the creeks. More than four miles from the river, there appeared to be little or no diminution in the number of the inhabitants, and the traffic was as great as at the mouth of the creek.

"'Having at last got past the crowd of boats, we advanced rapidly for two hours more, when we stopped at a *wat*, in order to give the men a rest. This *wat*, as its name "Laos" implies, was built by the inhabitants of the Laos country, and is remarkable (if we can trust to tradition) as being the limit of the Birmese invasion. Here, the Siamese say, a body of Birmans were defeated by the villagers, who had taken refuge in the *wat:* and they point out two large holes in the wall as the places where cannon-balls struck. After leaving this, we proceeded rapidly until about 12 P.M., when we reached the other branch of the Meinam (Meinam mahachen), and there we halted for the night.

"'Our journey the next day was most delightful; most of it lay through narrow creeks, their banks covered with atap and bamboo, whilst behind this screen were plantations of chilis, beans, peas, etc. Alligators and otters abounded in the creeks; and we shot several, and one of a peculiar breed of monkey also we killed. The Siamese name of it is *chang*,

and it is accounted a great delicacy: they also eat with avidity the otter. We crossed during the day the Tha-chin, a river as broad as the Meinam at Bangkok. Toward evening we entered the Mei-Klong, which we descended till we reached the sea-coast. Here we waited till the breeze should sufficiently abate to enable us to cross the bay.

"'11th.—We started about 4 A.M., and reached the opposite side in about three hours. The bay is remarkably picturesque, and is so shallow that, although we crossed fully four miles from the head of the bay, we never had more than six feet of water, and generally much less. Arrived at the other side we ascended the river on which Pechaburi is built. At the mouth of the river myriads of monkeys were to be seen. A very amusing incident occurred here. Mr. Hunter, wishing to get a juvenile specimen, fired at the mother, but, unfortunately, only wounded her, and she had strength enough to carry the young one into the jungle. Five men immediately followed her; but ere they had been out of sight five minutes we saw them hurrying toward us shouting, "*Ling, ling, ling, ling!*" (*ling*, monkey). As I could see nothing, I asked Mr. Hunter if they were after the monkey. "Oh, no," he replied; "the monkeys are after them!" And so they were—thousands upon thousands of them, coming down in a most unpleasant manner; and, as the tide was out, there was a great quantity of soft mud to cross before they could reach the boat, and here the monkeys gained very rapidly upon the men, and when at length the boat was reached, their savage pursuers were not twenty

yards behind. The whole scene was ludicrous in the extreme, and I really think if my life had depended upon it that I could not have fired a shot. To see the men making the most strenuous exertions to get through the deep mud, breathless with their run and fright combined, and the army of little wretches drawn up in line within twenty yards of us, screaming, and making use of the most diabolical language, if we could only have understood them! Besides, there was a feeling that they had the right side of the question. One of the *refugees*, however, did not appear to take my view of the case. Smarting under the disgrace, and the bamboos against which he ran in his retreat, he seized my gun, and fired both barrels on the exulting foe; they immediately retired in great disorder, leaving four dead upon the field. Many were the quarrels that arose from this affair among the men.

"'The approach to Pechaburi is very pleasant, the river is absolutely arched over by tamarind trees, while the most admirable cultivation prevails all along its course.

"'The first object which attracts the attention is the magnificent pagoda, within which is a reclining figure of Buddha, one hundred and forty-five feet in length. Above the pagoda, the priests have, with great perseverance, terraced the face of the rock to a considerable height. About half-way up the mountain, there is an extensive cave, generally known amongst foreigners as the "Cave of Idols;" it certainly deserves its name, if we are to judge from the number of figures of Buddha which it contains.

"'The talapoins assert that it is natural. It may be so in part, but there are portions of it in which the hand of man is visible. It is very small, not more than thirty yards in length, and about seven feet high; but anything like a cavern is so uncommon in this country, that this one is worth notice. We now proceeded to climb the mountain. It is very steep, but of no great height—probably not more than five hundred feet. It is covered with huge blocks of a stone resembling granite; these are exceedingly slippery, and the ascent is thus rendered rather laborious. But when we reached the top we were well repaid. The country for miles in each direction lay at our feet—one vast plain, unbroken by any elevation. It appeared like an immense garden, so carefully was it cultivated; the young rice and sugar-cane, of the most beautiful green, relieved by the darker shade of the cocoanut trees, which are used as boundaries to the fields—those fields traversed by suitable foot-paths. Then toward the sea the view was more varied: rice and sugar-cane held undisputed sway for a short distance from the town; then cocoanuts became more frequent, until the rice finally disappeared; then the bamboos gradually invaded the cocoanut trees; then the atap palm, with its magnificent leaf; and lastly came that great invader of Siam, the mangrove. Beyond were the mountains on the Malay Peninsula, stretching away in the distance.

"'With great reluctance did we descend from the little pagoda, which is built upon the very summit; but evening was coming on, and we had observed in

ascending some very suspicious-looking footprints mightily resembling those of a tiger.

"'Pechaburi is a thriving town, containing about twenty thousand inhabitants. The houses are, for the most part, neatly built, and no floating houses are visible. Rice and sugar are two-thirds dearer at Bangkok than they are here, and the rice is of a particularly fine description. We called upon the governor during the evening. Next morning we started for home, and arrived without any accident.'"

It was not until the completion of his prolonged tour of exploration through Cambodia, and his visit to the savage tribes on the frontier of Cochin-China, that Mouhot found time for his excursion to Pechaburi from Bangkok.

"I returned to the capital," he says, "after fifteen months' absence. During the greater part of this time I had never known the comfort of sleeping in a bed; and throughout my wanderings my only food had been rice or dried fish, and I had not once tasted good water. I was astonished at having preserved my health so well, particularly in the forests, where often wet to the skin, and without a change of clothes, I have had to pass whole nights by a fire, at the foot of a tree. Yet I have not had a single attack of fever, and been always happy and in good spirits, especially when lucky enough to light upon some novelty. A new shell or insect filled me with a joy which ardent naturalists alone can understand; but they know well how little fatigues and privations of all kinds are cared for when set against the delight experienced in mak-

ing one discovery after another, and in feeling that one is of some slight assistance to the votaries of science. It pleases me to think that my investigations into the archæology, entomology, and conchology of these lands may be of use to certain members of the great and generous English nation, who kindly encouraged the poor naturalist; while France, his own country, remained deaf to his voice.

"It was another great pleasure to me, after these fifteen months of travelling, during which very few letters from home had reached me, to find, on arriving at Bangkok, an enormous packet, telling me all the news of my distant family and country. It is indeed happiness, after so long a period of solitude, to read the lines traced by the beloved hands of an aged father, of a wife, of a brother. These joys are to be reckoned among the sweetest and purest of life.

"We stopped in the centre of the town, at the entrance of a canal, whence there is a view over the busiest part of the Meinam. It was almost night, and silence reigned around us; but when at daybreak I rose and saw the ships lying at anchor in the middle of the stream, while the roofs of the palaces and pagodas reflected the first rays of the sun, I thought that Bangkok had never looked so beautiful. However, life here would never suit me, and the mode of locomotion is wearisome after an active existence among the woods and in the chase.

"The river is constantly covered with thousands of boats of different sizes and forms, and the port of Bangkok is certainly one of the finest in the world, without excepting even the justly-renowned harbor

of New York. Thousands of vessels can find safe anchorage here.

"The town of Bangkok increases in population and extent every day, and there is no doubt but that it will become a very important capital. If France succeeds in taking possession of Annam, the commerce between the two countries will increase. It is scarcely a century old, and yet contains nearly half a million of inhabitants, among whom are many Christians. The flag of France floating in Cochin-China would improve the position of the missions in all the surrounding countries; and I have reason to hope that Christianity will increase more rapidly than it has hitherto done.

"I had intended to visit the northeast of the country of Laos, crossing Dong Phya Phai (the forest of the King of Fire), and going on to Hieng Naie, on the frontiers of Cochin-China; thence to the confines of Tonquin. I had planned to return afterward by the Mékong to Cambodia, and then to pass through Cochin-China, should the arms of France have been victorious there. However, the rainy season having commenced the whole country was inundated, and the forests impassable; so it was necessary to wait four months before I could put my project in execution. I therefore packed up and sent off all my collections, and after remaining a few weeks in Bangkok I departed for Pechaburi, situated about 13° north latitude, and to the north of the Malayan peninsula.

"On May 8th, at five o'clock in the evening, I sailed from Bangkok in a magnificent vessel, orna-

mented with rich gilding and carved work, belonging to Khrom Luang, one of the king's brothers, who had kindly lent it to a valued friend of mine. There is no reason for concealing the name of this gentleman, who has proved himself a real friend in the truest meaning of the word; but I rather embrace the opportunity of testifying my affection and gratitude to M. Malherbes, who is a French merchant settled at Bangkok. He insisted on accompanying me for some distance, and the few days he passed with me were most agreeable ones.

"The current was favorable, and, with our fifteen rowers, we proceeded rapidly down the stream. Our boat, adorned with all sorts of flags, red streamers, and peacocks' tails, attracted the attention of all the European residents, whose houses are built along the banks of the stream, and who, from their verandas, saluted us by cheering and waving their hands. Three days after leaving Bangkok we arrived at Pechaburi.

"The king was expected there the same day, to visit a palace which he has had built on the summit of a hill near the town. Khrom Luang, Kalahom (prime-minister), and a large number of mandarins had already assembled. Seeing us arrive, the prince called to us from his pretty little house; and as soon as we had put on more suitable dresses we waited on him, and he entered into conversation with us till breakfast-time. He is an excellent man, and, of all the dignitaries of the country, the one who manifests least reserve and hauteur toward Europeans. In education both this prince and the king

are much advanced, considering the state of the country, but in their manners they have little more refinement than the people generally.

"Our first walk was to the hill on which the palace stands. Seen from a little distance, this building, of European construction, presents a very striking appearance; and the winding path which leads up to it has been admirably contrived amid the volcanic rocks, basalt, and scoria which cover the surface of this ancient crater.

"About twenty-five miles off, stretches from north to south a chain of mountains called Deng, and inhabited by the independent tribes of the primitive Kariens. Beyond these rise a number of still higher peaks. On the low ground are forests, palm-trees, and rice-fields, the whole rich and varied in color. Lastly, to the south and east, and beyond another plain, lies the gulf, on whose waters, fading away into the horizon, a few scattered sails are just distinguishable.

"It was one of those sights not to be soon forgotten, and the king has evinced his taste in the selection of such a spot for his palace. No beings can be less poetical or imaginative than the Indo-Chinese; their hearts never appear to expand to the genial rays of the sun; yet they must have some appreciation of this beautiful scenery, as they always fix upon the finest sites for their pagodas and palaces.

"Quitting this hill, we proceeded to another, like it an extinct volcano or upheaved crater. Here are four or five grottoes, two of which are of surprising extent and extremely picturesque. A painting which

represented them faithfully would be supposed the offspring of a fertile imagination; no one would believe it to be natural. The rocks, long in a state of fusion, have taken, in cooling, those singular forms peculiar to scoria and basalt. Then, after the sea had retreated—for all these rocks have risen from the bottom of the water—owing to the moisture continually dripping through the damp soil, they have taken the richest and most harmonious colors. These grottoes, moreover, are adorned by such splendid stalactites, which, like columns, seem to sustain the walls and roofs, that one might fancy one's self present at one of the beautiful fairy scenes represented at Christmas in the London theatres.

"If the taste of the architect of the king's palace has failed in the design of its interior, here, at least, he has made the best of all the advantages offered to him by nature. A hammer touching the walls would have disfigured them; he had only to level the ground, and to make staircases to aid the descent into the grottoes, and enable the visitors to see them in all their beauty.

"The largest and most picturesque of the caverns has been made into a temple. All along the sides are rows of idols, one of superior size, representing Buddha asleep, being gilt.

"We came down from the mountain just at the moment of the king's arrival. Although his stay was not intended to exceed two days he was preceded by a hundred slaves, carrying an immense number of coffers, boxes, baskets, etc. A disorderly troop of soldiers marched both in front and behind, dressed in

the most singular and ridiculous costumes imaginable. The emperor Soulouque himself would have laughed, for certainly his old guard must have made a better appearance than that of his East Indian brother. Nothing could give a better idea of this set of tatterdemalions than the dressed-up monkeys which dance upon the organs of the little Savoyards. Their apparel was of coarse red cloth upper garments, which left a part of the body exposed, in every case either too large or too small, too long or too short, with white shakos, and pantaloons of various colors; as for shoes, they were a luxury enjoyed by few.

"A few chiefs, whose appearance was quite in keeping with that of their men, were on horseback leading this band of warriors, while the king, attended by slaves, slowly advanced in a little open carriage drawn by a pony.

"I visited several hills detached from the great chain Khao Deng, which is only a few miles off. During my stay here it has rained continually, and I have had to wage war with savage foes, from whom I never before suffered so much. Nothing avails against them; they let themselves be massacred with a courage worthy of nobler beings. I speak of mosquitoes. Thousands of these cruel insects suck our blood night and day. My body, face, and hands are covered with wounds and blisters. I would rather have to deal with the wild beasts of the forest. At times I howl with pain and exasperation. No one can imagine the frightful plague of these little demons, to whom Dante has omitted to assign a place in his infernal regions. I scarcely dare to

bathe, for my body is covered before I can get into the water. The natural philosopher who held up these little animals as examples of parental love was certainly not tormented as I have been.

"About ten miles from Pechaburi I found several villages inhabited by Laotians, who have been settled there for two or three generations. Their costumes consist of a long shirt and black pantaloons, like those of the Cochin-Chinese, and they have the Siamese tuft of hair. The women wear the same head-dress as the Cambodians. Their songs, and their way of drinking through bamboo pipes, from large jars, a fermented liquor made from rice and herbs, recalled to my mind what I had seen among the savage Stiêns. I also found among them the same baskets and instruments used by those tribes.

"The young girls are fair compared to the Siamese, and their features are pretty; but they soon grow coarse and lose all their charms. Isolated in their villages, these Laotians have preserved their language and customs, and they never mingle with the Siamese."

To any one who has had experience of the Siamese mosquitoes, it is delightful to find such thorough appreciation of them as Mouhot exhibits. In number and in ferocity they are unsurpassed. A prolonged and varied observation of the habits of this insect, in New Jersey and elsewhere, enables this editor to say that the mosquitoes of Siam are easily chief among their kind. The memory of one night at Paknam is still vivid and dreadful. So multitudinous, so irresistible, so intolerable were the swarms of these sangui-

nary enemies that not only comfort, but health and even life itself seemed jeopardized, as the irritation was fast bringing on a state of fever. There seemed no way but to flee. Orders were given to get up steam in the little steamer which had brought us from Bangkok, and we made all possible haste out of reach of the shore and anchored miles distant in the safe waters of the gulf till morning.

Mouhot remained for four months among the mountains of Pechaburi, "known by the names of Makaon Khao, Panam Knot, Khao Tamoune, and Khao Samroun, the last two of which are 1,700 and 1,900 feet above the level of the sea." He needed the repose after the fatigue of his long journey, and by way of preparation for his new and arduous explorations of the Laos country, from which, as the result proved, he was never to come back. He returned to Bangkok, and after a brief season of preparation and farewell, he started for the interior.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE TRIBES OF NORTHERN SIAM

UNTIL recent years little has been known or said of the inhabitants who occupy the remoter districts of Siam. Owing to its debilitating climate and the many dangers of travel in jungle and wilderness, explorers have thus far made but meagre contributions to our knowledge of the shy and savage tribes in the north and west. In spite of our ignorance, however, it is admitted that these various races found in the Indo-Chinese peninsula present problems of great ethnological interest, the solution of which will some day explain the origins of many language and race puzzles now quite insoluble. To most foreigners, Siam is the city of Bangkok and its neighborhood ; yet, to obtain a fair conception of the kingdom, as one of the foremost states of Asia, we must understand the variety and extent of the country, a few glimpses of which we may have through the reports of those who have penetrated its wilds.

For the most part, we are told by Mr. McCarthy, whose six years' experience in superintending the government survey, entitles him to respect as an authority, "the people settle on the banks of the rivers and are employed chiefly in cultivating rice. There are but few villages distant from the large

rivers, and in the mountainous parts of the kingdom the towns and villages are built in open flat valleys, picturesquely surrounded by the mountains, which are clothed with forests from top to bottom, the undergrowth being so heavy that one seldom or never sees any sport which would change the monotony of daily trudging through mountains, where one's view is confined to within ten yards around. There is one peculiar feature in this population of different nationalities, and that is that they do not amalgamate with one another; thus it comes about that near Bangkok itself villages of Burmans and Annamites are found living in separate communities, preserving their own language and customs."

The region to the west of the Meinam is mostly mountainous and a perfect wilderness of jungle, the country being sparsely inhabited. A short distance from the broad valley the high range appears which forms the water-shed between the Gulf of Siam and the Bay of Bengal. The portion of this range which lies above the Malay peninsula appears to be drained on its eastern slope, not by the "Mother of Waters" itself, but by its neighbor, the Mei-Klong, running almost parallel with it from the heights of the Karen country to the Gulf. "This river to Kanburi," says Dr. Collins, an American missionary who was the first to cross the wild district between Bangkok and Maulmein, "is an exceedingly winding, broad, clear, shallow stream, with a slow current and well-defined banks, on which are a few villages and many separated habitations. The best land seemed to be in the hands of Chinese, who cultivate tobacco, sugar-cane, cotton,

and rice. Many of the Chinese located on the banks of this river, as in other parts of Siam, have married native women and form the best element of the population. Quite a number are Roman Catholics, while all are sober, industrious, orderly, and prosperous."

After leaving his river-boat at Kanburi, the missionary pursued his journey across country by elephant through the regions occupied by the Karens, a simple and hardy race of mountaineers, who worship the forest spirits. This folk occupy in small numbers the border-land between Siam and Lower Burmah. "We saw," continues Dr. Collins, "very few signs of animal life in the forests; generally a profound silence reigned, broken only by the wild songs of the Karens, or the cracking of bamboos in the pathway of the elephants. It is true, in the early mornings we would see along the river banks whole families of monkeys basking in the warm sunshine, and talking over the plans of the day, but as we passed along they would retire into the depths of the forest. These forests could not be infested with tigers and other dangerous animals, as we frequently passed Karen families on foot, journeying from one village to another. The Karens have settlements all through the jungle. Their small villages consist of a few rude bamboo huts, and around them are cultivated their upland rice and cotton, while the mountain streams furnish them fish in abundance. Sometimes they raise fowls, and cultivate sweet potatoes, the red pepper, and flowers. They seldom remain over two or three seasons in the valleys, but move away to fresh land. Our forest paths led through

many abandoned Karen villages and plantations, where now rank weeds and young bamboos supplant the fields of rice and cotton. The Karens with whom we came in contact were mountain heathen Karens. They seemed to possess no wealth, cultivating only sufficient land to clothe and feed themselves. The women were fairer than the Siamese or Birmese; and it was a pleasant sight to see them always cheerful and industrious—pounding paddy, weaving their garments, or otherwise occupied in their simple household duties, and lightening their toil by singing plaintive native songs." Owing to a tradition that they would one day receive a religion from the West, these people are said to be peculiarly amenable to the influence and instruction of Christian missionaries.

Of the Lao or Shan tribes owning allegiance to the King of Siam, we have spoken very briefly in the second chapter of this volume. They probably represent the mixed and deteriorated remnant of the aborigines who were originally driven from Central China to occupy, under the national name of *Tai*, the forests and coasts of Indo-China. Such accounts as we possess of these peoples are fragmentary, and often strangely contradictory, their tribal names and divisions being applied by different travellers to a great variety of localities. In general, although the names are often used interchangeably, the word *Lao* seems to be given to that part of the great Shan (or Tai) race who live in the north and east of Siam, some of their tribes coming down as far south as the Cambodian frontier. Mr. Carl Bock, in his notes

taken on the spot, explains that "there are six Lao states directly tributary to Siam, all entirely independent of each other, but with several minor states dependent upon these larger ones. The rulers in all these states, even the smaller ones, are autocratic in their authority. Their chiefs hold office for life, but their places are not hereditary, being filled nominally by the King of Siam, but really on the election and recommendation of the people, who send notice to Bangkok on the decease of a chief, with a private intimation of their views as to a successor. Tribute is paid triennially, and takes the form of gold and silver betel-boxes, vases, and necklaces, each enriched with four rubies of the size of a lotus-seed, and a hundred of the size of a grain of Indian corn. Besides these are curious representations of trees in gold and silver, about eight feet high, each with four branches, from which again depend four twigs, with a single leaf at the end of each. The gold trees are valued at 1,080 ticals (£135) each, and the silver ones at 120 ticals (£15) each.

"Of all Laosians, those living in the extreme north are the most backward, and from what has been said it will be gathered that the instincts of the people generally are not of a very high order. They are mean to a degree; liberality and generosity are words they do not understand; they are devoid of ordinary human sympathy, being eaten up by an absorbing desire to keep themselves—each man for himself—out of the clutches of the spirits. Their highest earthly ambition is to hoard up money, vessels and ornaments of gold and silver, and anything else of

value; as to the means adopted for obtaining which they are not over-scrupulous. They are extremely untruthful and wonderfully apt at making excuses, and think no more of being discovered in a lie than of being seen smoking. I give them credit, however, of being, generally speaking, moral in their domestic relations.

"If a man's face is an index to his feelings, then the Laosians must be bereft of all capacity to appreciate any variety of mental emotions. It is the rarest phenomenon to see any change in their countenance or deportment, except—there is always one exception to every rule—when they are aroused to anger. This statement is more particularly true of the men, but even the women—demonstrative as the sex usually are—are seldom moved to either laughter or tears. Whatever news a Laosian may receive, whether of disaster or of joy, he hears it with a philosophic indifference depicted on his calm, stoical countenance that a European diplomatist would give a fortune to be able to imitate. But when any sudden feeling of anger or any latent resentment is aroused, then the passion begins to display itself, if not in any great change of facial expression, at any rate in general demeanor and in quick, restless movements of impatience and irritation."

A rather more favorable estimate of Laosian character is made by the missionaries who live among them, and presumably know them better. "Considering their disadvantages," says Miss McGilvary, "the Laos are a remarkably refined race, as is shown by many of their customs. Should a person be tell-

ing another of the stream which he had crossed, and wished to say it was ankle-deep, as he would feel a delicacy in referring to his person, his expression would be, 'I beg your pardon, but the water was ankle-deep.' If one wished to reach anything above another's head, he would beg the latter's pardon before raising his hand. A great and passionate love for flowers and music also indicates a delicacy of feeling. Although before missionaries went there the women did not know how to read, they were always trained to be useful in their homes, and a Laos girl who does not know how to weave her own dress is considered as ignorant as a girl in this country who does not know how to read.

"The holiday which most interests the missionaries' children is the New Year, when all, and especially the young, give themselves up to a peculiar form of merry-making, consisting in giving everyone a shower. Armed with buckets of water and bamboo reeds, by which they can squirt the water some distance, these people place themselves at the doors and gates and on the streets, ready to give any passer-by a drenching, marking out as special victims those who are foolish enough to wear good clothes on such a day. It is most amusing to watch them, after exhausting their supply of water, hasten to the river or well and run back, fearing the loss of one opportunity. Sometimes several torrents are directed on one individual; then, after the drenching, shouts of laughter fill the air. On this day the king and his court, with a long retinue of slaves, go to the river. Some of the attendants carry silver or brass basins filled with water

perfumed with some scented shrub or flower. When the king reaches the river's brink he goes a few steps into the water, where he takes his stand, while the princes and nobles surround him. The perfumed water is poured on the king's head, afterward on the heads of the nobles, and they plunge into the river with noisy splashings and laughter. The custom is also observed in families. A basin of water is poured on the head of the father, mother, and grandparents, by the eldest son or by some respected member of the family. The ceremony has some religious significance, being symbolical of blessings and felicity; a formula of prayer accompanies the ceremony in each case."

Like remote and uncivilized tribes the world over, the Laos are extremely and fanatically superstitious. Their fears of the supernatural are far more influential in directing their daily lives than their respect for the doctrines and practices of Buddhism, which is their accepted religion. An interesting account of one of their ruling delusions is quoted from Mr. Holt Hallett's article on Zimmé (Cheung Mai) in *Blackwood's Magazine* for September, 1889. "The method practised when consulting the beneficent spirits—who like mortals are fond of retaliating when provoked—is as follows: When the physician's skill has been found incapable of mastering a disease, a spirit-medium—a woman who claims to be in communion with the spirits—is called in. After arraying herself fantastically, the medium sits on a mat that has been spread for her in the front veranda, and is attended to with respect, and plied with ar-

rack by the people of the house, and generally accompanied in her performance by a band of village musicians with modulated music. Between her tipplings she chants an improvised doggerel, which includes frequent incantations, till at length, in the excitement of her potations, and worked on by her song, her body begins to sway about and she becomes frantic and seemingly inspired. The spirits are then believed to have taken possession of her body, and all her utterances from that time are regarded as those of the spirits.

"On showing signs of being willing to answer questions, the relations or friends of the sick person beseech the spirits to tell them what medicines and food should be given to the invalid to restore him or her to health; what they have been offended at; and how their just wrath may be appeased. Her knowledge of the family affairs and misdemeanors generally enables her to give shrewd and brief answers to the latter questions. She states that the *Pee*—in this case the ancestral, or, perhaps, village spirits—are offended by such an action or actions, and that to propitiate them such and such offerings should be made. In case the spirits have not been offended, her answers are merely a prescription, after which, if only a neighbor, she is dismissed with a fee of two or three rupees and, being more or less intoxicated, is helped home. In case the spirit medium's prescription proves ineffective, and the person gets worse, witchcraft is sometimes suspected and an exorcist is called in. The charge of witchcraft means ruin to the person accused, and to his or her family. It

arises as follows: The ghost or spirit of witchcraft is called Pee-Kah. No one professes to have seen it, but it is said to have the form of a horse, from the sound of its passage through the forest resembling the clatter of a horse's hoofs when at full gallop. These spirits are said to be reinforced by the deaths of very poor people, whose spirits were so disgusted with those who refused them food or shelter, that they determined to return and place themselves at the disposal of their descendants, to haunt their stingy and hard-hearted neighbors. Should anyone rave in delirium, a Pee-Kah is supposed to have passed by. Every class of spirits—even the ancestral, and those that guard the streets and villages—are afraid of the Pee-Kah. At its approach the household spirits take instant flight, nor will they return until it has worked its will and retired, or been exorcised. Yet the Pee-Kah is, as I have shown, itself an ancestral spirit, and follows as their shadow the son and daughter as it followed their parents through their lives. It is not ubiquitous, but at one time may attend the parent, and at another the child, when both are living. Its food is the entrails of its living victim, and its feast continues until its appetite is satisfied, or the feast is cut short by the incantations of the spirit-doctor or exorcist. Very often the result is the death of its victim. When the witch-finder is called in he puts on a knowing look, and after a cursory examination of the person, generally declares that the patient is suffering from a Pee-Kah. His task is then to find out whose Pee-Kah is devouring the invalid.

"After calling the officer of the village and a few headmen as witnesses, he commences questioning the invalid. He first asks 'Whose spirit has bewitched you?' The person may be in a stupor, half unconscious, half delirious from the severity of the disease, and therefore does not reply. A pinch or a stroke of a cane may restore consciousness. If so, the question is repeated; if not, another pinch or stroke is administered. A cry of pain may be the result. That is one step toward the disclosure; for it is a curious fact that, after the case has been pronounced one of witchcraft, each reply to the question, pinch, or stroke is considered as being uttered by the Pee-Kah through the mouth of the bewitched person. A person pinched or caned into consciousness cannot long endure the torture, especially if reduced by a long illness. Those who have not the wish or the heart to injure anyone, often refuse to name the wizard or witch until they have been unmercifully beaten. Or the sick person naming an individual as the owner of the spirit, other questions are asked, such as, 'How many buffaloes has he?' 'How many pigs?' 'How many chickens?' 'How much money?' etc. The answers to the questions are taken down by a scribe. A time is then appointed to meet at the house of the accused, and the same questions as to his possessions are put to him. If his answers agree with those of the sick person, he is condemned and held responsible for the acts of his ghost.

"The case is then laid before the judge of the court, the verdict is confirmed, and a sentence of banishment is passed on the person and his or her family. The

condemned person is barely given time to sell or remove his property. His house is wrecked or burnt, and the trees in the garden cut down, unless it happens to be sufficiently valuable for a purchaser to employ an exorcist, who for a small fee will render the house safe for the buyer; but it never fetches half its cost, and must be removed from the haunted ground. If the condemned person lingers beyond the time that has been granted to him, his house is set on fire, and, if he still delays, he is whipped out of the place with a cane. If he still refuses to go, or returns, he is put to death.

"Some years ago a case came to the knowledge of the missionaries, where two Karens were brought to the city by some of their neighbors, charged with causing the death of a young man by witchcraft. The case was a clear one against the accused. The young man had been possessed of a musical instrument, and had refused to sell it to the accused, who wished to purchase it. Shortly afterward he became ill and died in fourteen days. At his cremation, a portion of his body would not burn, and was of a shape similar to the musical instrument. It was clear that the wizards had put the form of the coveted instrument into his body to kill him. The Karens were beheaded, notwithstanding that they protested their innocence, and threatened that their spirits should return and wreak vengeance for their unjust punishment. In Mr. Wilson's opinion, the charge of witchcraft often arises from envy or from spite, and sickness for the purpose of revenge is sometimes simulated. A neighbor wants a house or garden, and the owner either re-

quires more than he wishes to pay or refuses to sell. Covetousness consumes his heart, and the witch-ghost is brought into action. Then the covetous person, or his child, or a neighbor falls ill, or feigns illness; the ailment baffles the skill of the physician, and the witch-finder is called in. Then all is smooth sailing, and little is left to chance."

The following paragraphs from the same article give an agreeable picture of Cheung Mai, or Zimmé, the chief town of this region, and the headquarters of an important branch of the American Presbyterian Mission.

"The city of Zimmé, which lies 430 yards to the west of the river, is divided into two parts, the one embracing the other like the letter L on the south and east sides. The inner city faces the cardinal points, and is walled and moated all round. The walls are of brick, 22 feet high, and crenelated at the top, where they are 3½ feet broad. The moat surrounding the walls is 30 feet wide and 7 feet deep. The outer city is more than half a mile broad, and is partly walled and partly palisaded on its exterior sides. Both cities are entered by gates leading in and out of a fortified courtyard. The inner city contains the palace of the head king, the residences of many of the nobility and wealthy men, and numerous religious buildings. In the outer city, which is peopled chiefly by the descendants of captives, the houses are packed closer together than in the inner one, the gardens are smaller, the religious buildings fewer, and the population more dense. The floors of the houses are all raised six or eight feet from the

ground, and the whole place has an air of trim neatness about it. Dr. Cheek estimates the population of the area covered by the city and its suburbs at about one hundred thousand souls. . . .

"It is a pretty sight in the early morning to watch the women and girls from neighboring villages streaming over the bridge on their way to the market, passing along in single file, with their baskets dangling from each end of a shoulder-bamboo, or accurately poised on their heads. The younger women move like youthful Dianas, with a quick, firm, and elastic tread, and in symmetry of form resemble the ideal models of Grecian art. The ordinary costume of these graceful maidens consists of flowers in their hair, which shines like a raven's wing and is combed back and arranged in a neat and beautiful knot; a petticoat or skirt, frequently embroidered near the bottom with silk, worsted, cotton, or gold and silver thread; and at times a pretty silk or gauze scarf cast carelessly over their bosom and one shoulder. Of late years, moreover, the missionaries have persuaded their female converts and the girls in their schools to wear a neat white jacket, and the custom is gradually spreading through the city and into the neighboring villages. The elder women wear a dark-blue cotton scarf which is sometimes replaced by a white cotton spencer, similar to that worn by married ladies in Burmah, and have an extra width added to the top of their skirt which can be raised and tucked in at the level of the armpit. On gala occasions it is the fashion to twine gold chains round the knot of their hair, and like-

wise adorn it with a handsome gold pin. The Shans are famous for their gold and silver chased work; and beautifully designed gold and silver ornaments, bracelets, necklaces, and jewel-headed cylinders in their ear-laps are occasionally worn by the wealthier classes."

Notices of the wilder tribes who inhabit the northeast of Siam are extremely inadequate, the region being practically unvisited by Europeans, and almost unknown to its titular sovereign, the king. The French expedition under Lagrée passed through the lower edge of the country on their toilsome journey up the Mekong in 1867, and M. de Carné furnishes us with some particulars of the natives in and about the chief centre, Luang Phrabang. "One must go," he says, "to the market to judge the variety of costumes and types. At a glance at this mixed population the least skilful of anthropologists would see beforehand the inextricable confusion of races and languages which he will meet at a short distance from Luang-Praban. Numbers of savages who have submitted to the king come every morning to the town to sell or buy. They live in the mountains. Their dress is extremely simple; so much so that it could hardly be lessened. . . . The Laotians, who are very proud of their half-civilization, look on these savages as much inferior to themselves, and indeed as almost contemptible. Every group of three miserable huts of theirs has a name of its own, known in the neighborhood; but the most important village of the people, who may be regarded as the original owners of the country, is called by the com-

mon and scornful name of Ban-Kas [or Bang Kha,] a kraal of savages. The stranger refuses to accept this estimate formed by perverted pride. The savages are hard workers, and the finest fields of rice and noblest herds of cattle I have seen have been in their parts of the country. They are all shy at first, but they are easily brought to be familiar. How often have I in my walks had to ask these children of the woods for shelter from the sun, or water to quench my thirst, or a mat on which to forget my fatigue! They did not understand my words, but divined with the quick instinct of hospitality the wants which brought me among them, and hastened to satisfy them. I have enjoyed positive feasts in these huts, where the bamboo, worked in a hundred ways, spread all the luxury before me it could display; and I cannot recall without gratitude the recollection of a collation made up of sticky rice, smoked iguana legs, and pepper, which a savage, some sixty years of age, whom I met in the forest, to whom my long beard caused astonishment rather than fear, offered me one day."

This was during the Mohammedan rebellion in southern China, when the natives south of the empire enjoyed a comparative degree of peace and prosperity. Since the conclusion of this and the Taiping insurrection, and the sharp conflict of the French in Annam, great numbers of Chinese, many of them the dregs of their country, have flocked to this wild region, and under their different "flags" or bands have for many years past inflicted untold misery in the gradual extermination of these harmless natives.

The devastators of this beautiful region are known generally as Haws. Our latest and most exact information about them comes from Mr. McCarthy, who was sent with a party by King Chulalonkorn to investigate the raids perpetrated in the kingdom by these wandering robbers. "The term Haw," he informs us, "is the Lao word for Chinamen, but it is now being applied to those worthies who employ their time in plundering. It is supposed that they were originally remnants of the old Taiping rebellion, who settled in Tonquin and lent themselves as soldiers to the then Annamite governors. In time they became too powerful for the governors and either exacted a large annual payment in silver or became governors themselves. They ranged themselves under different standards, the principal colors of which were black, red, yellow and striped (red, white and blue). The name of the chief of the standard was written in Chinese characters on the principal one. The bands were composed of Chinese from Yunnan, Kwangsi, and Kwangtung [the three southern provinces of China]. They ravaged the countries near them, extending their operations yearly, the governors of which used to employ another band to revenge their wrongs; and in this way the different flags were constantly fighting one against another until the French war in Tonquin, when they became united for the single purpose of fighting the French.

"It was the Haws of the striped banner who overran Chiang Kwang or Muang Puen about the year 1873, and extended their ravages as far as Nongkai

[on the bend of the Mekong in about latitude 18°]; here, however, they were destroyed by the Siamese. They came back, and the same Siamese general, Phraya Rat, who defeated them before, was sent against them again. He was wounded, however, shortly after making his attack upon their position, and the Haws eventually escaped. The honor of destroying the place fell to Phra Amarawasie, the son of the prime-minister, who has done credit to the training he received at the Royal Academy of Woolwich. On the northeast of Luang Phrabang, Phraya Suri Sak, a general in whom the king has always placed implicit trust, has been operating against Black Flags and Yellow Flags. These Black Flags are excellently armed with Remingtons, Martini-Henries, Sniders, and repeating rifles, and their ammunition is of the best, being all solid brass cartridges from Kynoch of Birmingham. I understand that an arrangement has been entered into by which the Haws are to be suppressed by the combined action of the French and Siamese. Let us hope that these beautiful countries will soon be restored to prosperity, and the inhabitants left free to lead the peaceful lives they so much desire." *

* Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society for March, 1888.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### SIAMESE LIFE AND CUSTOMS

THE impression which most travellers in Siam have received in regard to the moral characteristics of the people has been generally favorable, and is on the whole confirmed by the judgment of foreigners who have been longer resident among them. They have, of course, the defects and vices which are to be expected in a half savage people, governed through many generations by the capricious tyranny of an Oriental despotism. And the climate and natural conditions of the country are not suited to develop in them the hardier and nobler virtues. Industry and self-sacrifice can hardly be looked for as characteristics of people to whom nature is so bountiful as to require of them no exertion to provide either food or raiment. And, on the other hand, with the sloth and inactivity to which nature invites, the animal passions, by indulgence, often become fierce and overmastering. But it seems to be agreed that if the Siamese lack the industry and economy of their neighbors, the Chinese, they have not the passionate and sometimes treacherous character of the Malays. To the traveller they seem inoffensive, almost to timidity, and with a more than ordinary share of "natural affection." One of the Roman

SIAMESE WOMEN.

Catholic missionaries, quoted in Bowring, says, "Parents know how to make themselves extremely beloved and respected, and Siamese children have great docility and sweetness. Parents answer to princes for the conduct of their children; they share in their chastisements, and deliver them up when they have offended. If the son takes flight, he never fails to surrender himself when the prince apprehends his father or his mother, or his other collateral relations older than himself, to whom he owes respect." Bowring himself testifies that "of the affection of parents for children and the deference paid by the young to the old, we saw abundant evidence in all classes of society. Fathers were constantly observed carrying about their offspring in their arms, and mothers engaged in adorning them. The king was never seen in public by us without some of his younger children near him; and we had no intercourse with the nobles where numbers of little ones were not on the carpets, grouped around their elders, and frequently receiving attention from them."

The large sums frequently expended in the decoration of the little children with anklets and bracelets and necklaces and chains of gold (often hundreds of dollars in value and constituting their sole costume), are another proof of the same parental fondness. The great beauty of the children has attracted the notice of almost all travellers, and they seem as amiable as they are beautiful. Their skins are colored with a fine powder, of a deep, golden color, and an aromatic smell. "In the morning, Siamese mothers may be seen industriously engaged in *yellowing* their

offspring from head to heel. So universal is the custom, that in caressing the children of the king or nobles, you may be certain to carry away yellow stains upon your dress. A small quantity mingled with quick-lime makes a paste of a bright pink color, of which the consumption is so large for spreading on the betel-leaves which are used to wrap around the areca-nut, that I have seen whole boat-loads moving about for sale amidst the floating bazaars on the Meinam. This *curcuma* or Indian saffron is known to be the coloring matter in the curries, mulligatawnies and chutnees of India"—and is thus seen to be available for the inside as well as the outside of men.

The relations between the sexes seem to be characterized by propriety and decorum; and though polygamy is permitted and practised by the higher classes, and divorce is easy and somewhat frequent, yet, "on the whole," says Bowring, "the condition of woman is better in Siamese than in most Oriental countries. The education of Siam women is little advanced. Many of them are good musicians, but their principal business is to attend to domestic affairs. They are as frequently seen as men in charge of boats on the Meinam. They generally distribute alms to the bonzes, and attend the temples, bringing their offerings of flowers and fruit. In the country they are busied with agricultural pursuits. They have seldom the art of plying the needle, as the Siamese garments almost invariably consist of a single piece of cloth."

Of the acuteness and wit of a people, the best evidence is to be found in their familiar proverbs,

SIAMESE ROPE-DANCER.

and the following may be cited (from Bowring) in illustration of their shrewd sense and Chinese aptitude for seizing nature's hints.

"When you go into a wood, do not forget your wood-knife.

"An elephant though he has four legs may slip; and a doctor is not always right.

"Go up by land, you meet a tiger; go down by water, you meet a crocodile.

"If a dog bite you, do not bite him again."

Between the luxury and splendor of the king's court and the poverty of the common people there is of course the greatest and most painful contrast. The palaces of the king are filled with whatever the wealth and power of their owner can procure. The hovels of the common peasants are bare and comfortless, the furniture consisting only of a few coarse vessels of earthenware or wicker-work, and a mat or two spread upon the floor. In houses of a slightly better class will be found carpenter's tools, a movable oven, various cooking utensils, both in copper and clay, spoons of mother-of-pearl, plates and dishes in metal and earthenware, and a large porcelain jar, and another of copper for fresh water. There is also a tea-set, and all the appliances for betel chewing and tobacco smoking, some stock of provisions and condiments for food.

Probably the most reliable witnesses to the true character of the Siamese are those Protestant missionaries whose lives are passed in intimate association with the people and devoted to doing them good. From a recent book written by one of these, Miss M.

L. Cort,* we shall obtain a fair idea of life in Siam and of certain customs dear to the common people.

"Women enjoy greater liberty than in almost any other Oriental land. You meet them everywhere; and in the bazaars and markets nearly all the buying and selling is done by them. As servants and slaves, too, they are seen performing all sorts of labor in the open streets. Still, they are downtrodden and considered infinitely inferior to men. It is a significant fact that although boys have been educated for past centuries in the Buddhist monasteries, there are not and have never been, so far as I can learn, any native schools for girls. Quite a number, however, learn to read in their own families, but such knowledge is looked upon as a superfluous accomplishment, and they are not encouraged in it, neither is any one ashamed to acknowledge her ignorance of books.

"The Siamese are a pleasant, good-natured people, but lazy and indolent to the utmost degree, and vain, shallow, and self-conceited. Their greatest vices are lying, gambling, immorality, and intemperance, although the latter is strictly forbidden by one of the commandments in their Buddhist decalogue."

The Siamese are deplorably susceptible to the evil effects of alcohol and opium. Physically they are a small and rather weakly race, and the effect of strong drink upon them is shown in the rapid deterioration of their bodily health; while their temperament, which is by nature light, timid, and gay, becomes morose and sullen under the same influence. The terrible inroads which were at one time made on the health

* Siam: or, The Heart of Farther India. New York, 1886.

and well-being of the people from the too-abundant use of arrack, a native spirit distilled from rice, brought these truths vividly before the minds of the authorities, and led to the adoption of stringent regulations affecting the sale of that spirit, to the loss and much to the regret of the Chinese dealers who had acquired a monopoly of the trade. A still more determined crusade was undertaken against opium-smoking, which was even held to be a blacker and more pernicious habit than swilling arrack. Strict laws prohibiting the practice were passed and enforced; and any ill-starred Siamese now found pipe in hand has the choice given him of either denationalizing himself by adopting the Chinese pigtail, and paying an annual tax as an alien, or of suffering death. In this traffic also the purveyors are Chinese, who, while protesting, perhaps too much, against the importation of the drug into their own country, show no compunction whatever in distributing it broadcast among the people of other nations.

Returning to Miss Cort's account: "The dress of the Siamese," she writes," is very simple and comfortable, consisting of a waist-cloth, jacket, and scarf, and sometimes a hat and sandals. If all would at all times wear the native dress there would be no occasion for fault-finding. But as a nation they do not know what shame is, and as the climate is mild and pleasant, and the majority of the people poor and careless, their usual dress consists of a simple waist-cloth, adjusted in a very loose and slovenly manner; while many children until they are ten or twelve years old wear no clothing whatever. When foreigners first

arrive in Siam they are shocked almost beyond endurance at the nudity of the people; and although they constantly preach a gospel of dress, their influence in this respect seems less apparent than in almost any other. Not until Siam is clothed need she expect a place among respectable, civilized nations.

"The old-fashioned shave, which left a patch of stiff bristles on the top of the head, like a shoe-brush, is no longer the universal style. European trims are fashionable in the capital, and some of the young men are trying to cultivate the mustache, while the women let their hair cover the whole head and dress it with cocoanut oil. They shave their foreheads, rub beeswax on their lips, powder their faces, and perfume their bodies. They bend their joints back and forth to make them supple, and give the elbow a peculiarly awkward twist which they consider very graceful.

"Their salutations are decidedly peculiar. The old style is to get down on all fours, and then resting on the knees, raise the clasped hands three times above the head, and also bow the head forward until the brow touches the floor. They kiss with their noses, by pressing them against their friends', and saying 'Very fragrant, very fragrant!' while they take long, satisfied sniffs. Many are now learning to shake hands and make graceful bows like Europeans, but the imported kiss is not yet in vogue, and I do not see that it ever can be until betel is discarded, for at present the nose is a more kissable feature of the Siamese face than the mouth.

"The people are exceedingly fond of jewelry, and

often their gold chains and rings are the only adornment the body can boast. Many a young girl refuses to wear a jacket because it would cover up her chains, which are worn as a hunter carries his game-bag, over one shoulder and under the arm. She prefers a scarf which she can arrange and rearrange, and thus display the glitter of her golden ornaments. They wear a great many gold rings, and their ear-rings are often costly and beautiful. They also have gold armlets and anklets and charms encircling neck and waist, and the higher ranks now wear gold girdles with jewelled clasps. The jewelry is of odd and unique designs—snake-bracelets; necklaces of gold turtles, fish and flowers, set with gems; dragon-headed rings, with diamond, emerald, or ruby eyes, and a tongue that moves. Some rings have little birds poised upon them, with out-spread wings and sparkling with jewels; golden elephants, and many other rich and costly designs. . . .

"All ordinary Siamese houses must have three rooms; indeed, so important is this number considered to the comfort of the family, that the suitor must often promise to provide three rooms ere the parents will let him claim his bride. There is the common bedroom, an outer room where they sit during the day and receive their visitors, and the kitchen. Let me begin at the latter and try to describe the dirty, dingy place. Having no godliness, the next thing to it, cleanliness, is entirely lacking. There is a rude box filled with earth, where they build the fire and do what they call the cooking; that is, they boil rice and make curry, and roast fish and bananas over the coals. There

is no making of bread or pie, of cake or pudding; no roasts, no gravies, no soups. Even vegetables are seldom cooked at home, but are prepared by others and sold in the markets, or peddled in the streets. There they buy boiled sweet potatoes, green corn, and preserved fruits, curries, roasted fish, and ants, peanuts, and bananas, sliced pineapples, and melons, and squash. Pickled onions and turnips are sold in the streets of Bangkok just as pickled beets are in Damascus. Curry is made of all sorts of things, but is usually a combination of meat or fish, and vegetables. If you want an English name for it that all can understand, you must call it a stew. The ingredients are chopped very fine or pounded in a mortar, especially the red peppers, onions, and spices. The predominant flavor is red pepper, so hot and fiery that your mouth will smart and burn for half an hour after you have eaten it. Still many of the curries are very good, and with steamed rice furnish a good meal. But sometimes a 'broth of abominable things is in their vessels,' as for instance, when they make curry of rats or bats, or of the flesh of animals that have died of disease, and they flavor it with *kapick*, a sort of rotten fish, of which all Siamese are inordinately fond. It is unrivalled in strength of fragrance and flavor. Siam is unique in that she possesses two of the most abominable things, and yet the most delicious, if we believe what we hear, and they are the durian, a large fruit found only on this peninsula, and 'kapick,' which I hope is not found anywhere outside of Siam.

"There is no regularity about their meals, and they do not wait for one another, but eat when they get

SIAMESE LADIES AT DINNER.

hungry. In the higher families the men always eat first and by themselves, and the wives and children and dogs take what is left. The usual rule is for each one to wash his own rice-bowl, and turn it upside down in a basket in a corner of the kitchen, there to drip and dry till the next time it is needed. They eat with their fingers, very few having so much even as a spoon.

"The kitchen floors are nearly all made of split bamboos, with great cracks between, through which they pour all the slops and push the dirt, so there is no sweeping or scrubbing to do. Near the door are several large earthen jars for water, which are filled from the river by the women or servants as often as they get empty, and here they wash their feet before they enter the house. They also use brass basins and trays a great deal, but for lack of scouring they are discolored and green with verdigris, and I cannot help thinking the use of such vessels is one fruitful source of the dreadful sores and eruptions with which the whole nation is afflicted."

It would be hopeless to endeavor to describe all the peculiarities of native fashion and thought, many of which, indeed, are already disappearing under the advancing tide of western civilization. Like all idolatrous nations, the people are subject to rank superstitions and curious fancies, some of them gross or brutal, but more often whimsical in their extravagance. To express, for example, the duration of a *kop*, one of the divisions of eternity, they say that when a stone ten miles square, which is visited once a century by an angel who brushes it with a gossamer web, is finally worn away, then a *kop* is com-

pleted. Compared with other Asiatic nations, the Siamese cannot be called cruel, what pain they inflict comes in most cases from ignorance or obtuseness, seldom from wantonness. Punishments, of course, involve whipping, and in capital offences the victim loses his head in the old-fashioned way. But, Miss Cort tells us, "after taking a soothing draught, provided by merciful Buddhists who wish to make merit, the victim's eyes are bandaged and his ears stuffed with mud, and thus he is at least partially unconscious of the stroke that destroys his life. . . Some offenders, instead of being executed, are degraded from all titles and rank, and condemned to cut grass for elephants for life. They are branded on the forehead, and have to cut the grass themselves; no one is allowed to help them, nor can they buy it with their own money." A glance at the customs connected with birth, marriage, and death will be interesting, and will serve to illustrate the peculiarities of Siamese life.

"Marriages," says Sir John Bowring, "are the subject of much negotiation, undertaken, not directly by the parents, but by 'go-betweens,' nominated by those of the proposed bridegroom, who make proposals to the parents of the intended bride. A second repulse puts the extinguisher on the attempted treaty; but if successful, a large boat, gayly adorned with flags and accompanied by music, is laden with garments, plate, fruits, betel, etc. In the centre is a huge cake or cakes, in the form of a pyramid, printed in bright colors. The bridegroom accompanies the procession to the house of his future

father-in-law, where the lady's dowry and the day for the celebration of the marriage are fixed. It is incumbent on the bridegroom to erect or to occupy a house near that of his intended, and a month or two must elapse before he can carry away his bride. No religious rites accompany the marriage, though bonzes are invited to the feast, whose duration and expense depend upon the condition of the parties. Music is an invariable accompaniment. Marriages take place early; I have seen five generations gathered round the head of a family. I asked the senior Somdetch how many of his descendants lived in his palace; he said he did not know, but there were a hundred or more. It was indeed a frequent answer to the inquiry in the upper ranks, 'What number of children and grandchildren have you?' 'Oh, multitudes; we cannot tell how many.' I inquired of the first king how many children had been born to him; he said, 'Twelve before I entered the priesthood, and eleven since I came to the throne.' I have generally observed that a pet child is selected from the group to be the special recipient of the smiles and favors of the head of the race.

"Though wives or concubines are kept in any number according to the wealth or will of the husband, the wife who has been the object of the marriage ceremony, called the Khan mak, takes precedence of all the rest, and is really the sole legitimate spouse; and she and her descendants are the only legal heirs to the husband's possessions. Marriages are permitted beyond the first degree of affinity. Divorce is easily obtained on application from the

woman, in which case the dowry is restored to the wife. If there be only one child, it belongs to the mother, who takes also the third, fifth, and all those representing odd numbers; the husband has the second, fourth, etc. A husband may sell a wife that he has purchased, but not one who has brought him a dowry. If the wife is a party to contracting debts on her husband's behalf, she may be sold for their redemption, but not otherwise."

One natural result of polygamy is, not only to take away from the beauty and dignity of the marriage relation, but also to lessen the amount of ceremony with which the marriage is celebrated. A Siamese of the higher class is generally "so much married," that it is hardly worth his while to make much fuss about it, or indulge in much parade on the occasion. Accordingly the ceremonial would seem to be much less than that of burial. For a man can die but once, and his funeral is not an event to be many times repeated.

A singular custom connected with childbirth is described by Dr. Bradley, a former American missionary. The occasion was the first confinement of the wife of the late second king, in the year 1835. Dr. Bradley was dining with a party of friends at the house of the Portuguese consul. He says: "Just before we rose from table, a messenger from Prince Chowfah-noi [the late second king] came, apologizing for his master's absence from the dinner, and requesting my attendance on his wife in her first parturition. The call for me, although silently given, was quickly understood by all the party, and the in-

terest which it excited was of no ordinary character, because it indicated a violation of the sacred rules, absurdities, and cruelties of Siamese midwifery, and that too by the second man in the kingdom.

"I was obedient to the call, and was forthwith conducted thither in H. R. Highness's boat after I had accompanied my wife to our home. The prince was at the landing awaiting my arrival. His salutation in English was most expressive, indicating peculiar pleasure in seeing me, informing me that his wife had given birth to a daughter a little before my arrival, and saying that in accordance with Siamese custom, she was lying by a fire. He expressed great abhorrence of the custom, and desired me to prevail upon his friends and the midwives to dispense with it, and substitute the English custom. To confirm him still more in his opinion that the English custom was incomparably the best, I spread before him many arguments and appealed to humanity itself. He appeared to enter fully into my views, saying that his wife was of the same opinion, but expressed much fear that no improvement could be made in her situation in consequence of the influence of the ex-queen, his mother, and princesses and midwives.

"I was not allowed to see his wife until after his mother and princesses had retired, which was not till quite late in the evening. The prince went a little time before me to prepare the way, and then sent his chamberlain to conduct me to the house of his wife, where he received me and led me to the bedside of his suffering companion. She was surrounded

by a multitude of old women affecting wondrous wisdom in the treatment of their patient. The fiery ordeal had indeed commenced, and the poor woman was doomed to lie before a hot fire a full month. I found the mother lying on a narrow wooden bench without a cushion, elevated above the floor eight or ten inches, with her bare back exposed to a hot fire about eighteen inches distant. The fire, I presume to say, was sufficiently hot to have roasted a spare-rib at half the distance. Having lain a little time in this position, she was rolled over and had her abdomen exposed to the flame.

"With all the reasoning and eloquence I could employ, both through the prince and speaking directly to them, I could not persuade the ignorant women that it would be prudent to suspend their course of treatment, even for a night, so that the sufferer might have a little quiet rest on a comfortable bed. They said that the plan of treatment which I proposed was entirely new to them, and that I was also a stranger, and therefore it would not do at all to expose so honorable a personage to the dangers of an *experiment.*

"The prince then informed me that this amount of fire was to be continued three days, after which its intensity would have to be doubled, and continued for 30 days, as it was the mother's first child. The custom, he said, is to abridge the term to 25, 20, 18, 15, and 11 days, according to the number of children the woman has had.

"Having had a look at the infant princess lying in a neatly-curtained bed, I retired from the place

with scarcely any expectation that my visit would effect any immediate good.

"I visited Chowfah-noi the next evening in company with Mrs. B. The thought had occurred to me that she could probably exert more influence with the females than I could, and that possibly she might induce them to adopt my plan of practice in relation to the mother and the child. We were heartily welcomed by his royal highness, who first took much pleasure in showing us all his curiosities, and then gave us an interview with his lady. She was still lying by a hot fire, and complained much of soreness of the hips from pressure on the hard couch. At first she seemed to be somewhat abashed at the presence of Mrs. B., whom she had never before seen. But it was not long ere that was all exchanged for a good degree of intimacy, seeing that she was a woman like herself. Mrs. B. prevailed on her to take some of my medicine and to have the child put to the breast of its mother instead of giving it up to a wet-nurse. But though she made the experiment in our presence, there was no reason to think that it was continued.

"Two days later the prince sent for me in great haste, about 2 P.M., to see his wife and child. I hastened to the palace, but was too late to do anything for the child, as it had died a little before my arrival. The prince was evidently much affected at the death of his first-born, and there was much weeping among the relatives and servants, who had congregated in multitudes in apartments adjacent to the room which the mother occupied. The prince was very anxious

concerning his wife, and seemed to wish with all his heart to have her taken out of the hands of native physicians and placed under my care. This he labored indefatigably to accomplish for more than two hours, while I waited for the result. But to his sorrow he at length reported that he could not succeed, and said that his mother and sisters and physicians, together with a multitude of conceited and headstrong old women, were too much for him, and that he would be obliged to allow them to go on in their own way, however hazardous the consequences. He wished me to give him the privilege of sending for me if his wife should by her own physicians be considered in a dangerous way. I had declined doing anything in the case unless I could have the entire care of the patient, fearing that if I attempted to administer while the native means were being employed, I should bring reproach both upon European medical practice, and the dear cause which I had espoused."

"Shaving the hair tuft of children is a great family festival, to which relations and friends are invited, to whom presents of cakes and fruits are sent. A musket-shot announces the event. Priests recite prayers, and wash the head of the young person, who is adorned with all the ornaments and jewels accessible to the parents. Music is played during the ceremony, which is performed by the nearest relatives; and congratulations are addressed, with gifts of silver, to the newly shorn. Sometimes the presents amount to large sums of money. Dramatic representations among the rich accompany the festivity, which in such case lasts for several days.

BUILDING ERECTED AT FUNERAL OF SIAMESE OF HIGH RANK.

"Education begins with the shaving the tuft, and the boys are then sent to the pagodas to be instructed by the bonzes in reading and writing, and in the dogmas of religion. They give personal service in return for the education they receive. That education is worthless enough, but every Siamese is condemned to pass a portion of his life in the temple, which many of them never afterward quit. Hence, the enormous supply of an unproductive, idle, useless race.

"When a Thaï (Siamese) is at the point of death the talapoins are sent for, who sprinkle lustral water upon the sufferer, recite passages which speak of the vanity of earthly things from their sacred books, and cry out, repeating the exclamation in the ears of the dying, 'Arahang! arahang!' (a mystical word implying the purity or exemption of Buddha from concupiscence). When the dying has heaved his last breath the whole family utter piercing cries, and address their lamentations to the departed: 'O father benefactor! why leave us? What have we done to offend you? Why depart alone? It was your own fault. Why did you eat the fruit that caused the dysentery? We foretold it; why did not you listen to us? O misery! O desolation! O inconstancy of human affairs!' And they fling themselves at the feet of the dead, weep, wail, kiss, utter a thousand tender reproaches, till grief has exhausted its lamentable expressions. The body is then washed and enveloped in white cloth; it is placed in a coffin covered with gilded paper, and decorated with tinsel flowers. A daïs is prepared, ornamented with the

same materials as the coffin, but with wreaths of flowers and a number of wax-lights. After a day or two the coffin is removed, not through the door, but through an opening specially made in the wall; the coffin is escorted thrice round the house at full speed, in order that the dead, forgetting the way through which he has passed, may not return to molest the living. The coffin is then taken to a large barge, and placed on a platform, surmounted by the daïs, to the sound of melancholy music. The relations and friends, in small boats, accompany the barge to the temple where the body is to be burnt. Being arrived, the coffin is opened and delivered to the officials charged with the cremation, the corpse having in his mouth a silver tical (2*s.* 6*d.* in value) to defray the expenses. The burner first washes the face of the corpse with cocoanut milk; and if the deceased have ordered that his body shall be delivered to vultures and crows, the functionary cuts it up and distributes it to the birds of prey which are always assembled in such localities. The corpse being placed upon the pile, the fire is kindled. When the combustion is over, the relatives assemble, collect the principal bones, which they place in an urn, and convey them to the family abode. The garb of mourning is white, and is accompanied by the shaving of the head. The funerals of the opulent last for two or three days. There are fireworks, sermons from the bonzes, nocturnal theatricals, where all sorts of monsters are introduced. Seats are erected within the precincts of the temples, and games and gambling accompany the rites connected with the dead."

At the death of any member of the royal family the funeral ceremonies become a matter of national importance. If it is the king who is dead the whole country is in mourning; all heads are shaved. The ceremonies at the cremation of the body of the late first king lasted from the 12th of March (1870) till the 21st of the same month. The king of Cheung-mai came from his distant home among the Laos to be present on the occasion; and the pomp and expense of the ceremony, for which preparations had been more than a year in progress, surpassed anything that had been known in the history of Siam. The following description of the funeral of one of the high commissioners who negotiated the English treaty, and who died a few days after the signing of the treaty, was furnished to Sir John Bowring by an eye-witness. The ceremonies at the royal funeral were not dissimilar, though on a more extensive scale.

"The building of the *men*, or temple, in which the burning was to take place, occupied four months, during the whole of which time between three and four hundred men were constantly engaged. The whole of it was executed under the personal superintendence of the 'Kalahome.'

"It would be difficult to imagine a more beautiful object than this temple was, when seen from the opposite side of the river. The style of architecture was similar to that of the other temples in Siam; the roof rising in the centre, and thence running down in a series of gables, terminating in curved points. The roof was covered entirely with scarlet

and gold, while the lower part of the building was blue, with stars of gold. Below, the temple had four entrances leading directly to the pyre; upon each side, as you entered, were placed magnificent mirrors, which reflected the whole interior of the building, which was decorated with blue and gold, in the same manner as the exterior. From the roof depended immense chandeliers, which at night increased the effect beyond description. Sixteen large columns, running from north to south, supported the roof. The entire height of the building must have been 120 feet, its length about fifty feet, and breadth forty feet. In the centre was a raised platform, about seven feet high, which was the place upon which the urn containing the body was to be placed. Upon each side of this were stairs covered with scarlet and gold cloth.

"This building stood in the centre of a piece of ground of about two acres extent, the whole of which ground was covered over with close rattan-work, in order that visitors might not wet their feet, the ground being very muddy.

"This ground was enclosed by a wall, along the inside of which myriads of lamps were disposed, rendering the night as light as the day. The whole of the grounds belonging to the adjoining temple contained nothing but tents, under which Siamese plays were performed by dancing-girls during the day. During the night, transparencies were in vogue. Along the bank of the river, Chinese and Siamese plays (performed by men) were in great force, and to judge by the frequent cheering of the populace, no

small talent was shown by the performers, which talent in Siam consists entirely in obscenity and vulgarity.

"All approaches were blocked long before daylight each morning, by hundreds—nay, thousands of boats of every description in Siam, *sampans*, *mapet*, *mak'èng*, *ma guen*, etc., etc.; these were filled with presents of white cloth, no other presents being accepted or offered during a funeral. How many shiploads of fine shirting were presented during those few days it is impossible to say. Some conception of the number of boats may be had from the fact that, in front of my floating house I counted seventy-two large boats, all of which had brought cloth.

"The concourse of people night and day was quite as large as at any large fair in England; and the whole scene, with the drums and shows, the illuminations and the fireworks, strongly reminded me of Greenwich Fair at night. The varieties in national costume were considerable, from the long flowing dresses of the Mussulman to the scanty *pan-hung* of the Siamese.

"Upon the first day of the ceremonies, when I rose at daylight, I was quite surprised at the number and elegance of the large boats that were dashing about the river in every direction. Some of them with elegantly-formed little spires (two in each boat) of a snowy-white, picked out with gold, others with magnificent scarlet canopies with curtains of gold, others filled with soldiers dressed in red, blue, or green, according to their respective regiments, the whole making a most effective *tableau*, far superior

to any we had during the time the embassy was here.

"Whilst I was admiring this scene I heard the cry of *Sedet* (the name of the king when he goes out), and turning round, beheld the fleet of the king's boats sweeping down. His majesty stopped at the *men*, where an apartment had been provided for him. The moment the king left his boat, the most intense stillness prevailed—a silence that was absolutely painful. This was, after the lapse of a few seconds, broken by a slight stroke of a tom-tom. At that sound every one on shore and in the boats fell on his knees, and silently and imperceptibly the barge containing the high priest parted from the shore at the Somdetch's palace, and floated with the tide toward the *men*. This barge was immediately followed by that containing the urn, which was placed upon a throne in the centre of the boat. One priest knelt upon the lower part of the urn, in front, and one at the back. (It had been constantly watched since his death.) Nothing could exceed the silence and *immovability* of the spectators. The tales I used to read of nations being turned to statues were here realized, with the exception that all had the same attitude. It was splendid, but it was fearful. During the whole of the next day, the urn stayed in the *men*, in order that the people might come and pay their last respects.

"The urn, or rather its exterior cover, was composed of the finest gold, elegantly carved and studded with innumerable diamonds. It was about five feet high and two feet in diameter.

"Upon the day of the burning the two kings arrived about 4 P.M. The golden cover was taken off, and an interior urn of brass now contained the body, which rested upon cross-bars at the bottom of the urn. Beneath were all kinds of odoriferous gums.

"The first king, having distributed yellow cloths to an indefinite quantity of priests, ascended the steps which led to the pyre, holding in his hand a lighted candle, and set fire to the inflammable materials beneath the body. After him came the second king, who placed a bundle of candles in the flames; then followed the priests, then the princes, and lastly the relations and friends of the deceased. The flames rose constantly above the vase, but there was no unpleasant smell.

"His majesty, after all had thrown in their candles, returned to his seat, where he distributed to the Europeans a certain number of limes, each containing a gold ring or a small piece of money. Then he commenced *scrambling* the limes, and seemed to take particular pleasure in just throwing them between the princes and the missionaries, in order that they might meet together in the 'tug of war.'

"The next day the bones were taken out, and distributed among his relations, and this closed the ceremonies. During the whole time the river each night was covered with fireworks, and in Siam the pyrotechnic art is far from being despicable."

## CHAPTER XVII.

### NATURAL PRODUCTIONS OF SIAM

THE varieties of animal and vegetable life with which the tropics everywhere abound are in Siam almost innumerable. From the gigantic elephant and rhinoceros in the jungle to the petty mosquitoes that infest the dwellings and molest the slumbers of the crowded city; from the gigantic Indian fig-tree to the tiniest garden-blossom, an almost infinite diversity of life and growth invites attention. The work of scientific observation and classification has been, as yet, only very imperfectly accomplished. Much has been done by the missionaries, especially by Dr. House of the American Presbyterian Mission, who is a competent and scientific observer. And the lamented Mouhot, gathered vast and valuable collections in the almost unexplored regions to which he penetrated. But no doubt there are still undiscovered treasures of which men of science will presently lay hold.

"Elephants," says Bowring, "are abundant in the forests of Siam, and grow sometimes to the height of twelve or thirteen feet. The habits of the elephant are gregarious; but though he does not willingly attack a man, he is avoided as dangerous; and a troop of elephants will, when going down to a river to drink,

submerge a boat and its passengers. The destruction even of the wild elephant is prohibited by royal orders, yet many are surreptitiously destroyed for the sake of their tusks. At a certain time of the year tame female elephants are let loose in the forests. They are recalled by the sound of a horn, and return accompanied by wild males, which they compel, by blows of the proboscis, to enter the walled prisons which have been prepared for their capture. The process of taming commences by keeping them for several days without food. Then a cord is passed round their feet, and they are attached to a strong column. The delicacies of which they are most fond are then supplied them, such as sugar-canes, plantains, and fresh herbs, and at the end of a few days the animal is domesticated and resigned to his fate.

"Without the aid of the elephant it would scarcely be possible to traverse the woods and jungles of Siam. He makes his way as he goes, crushing with his trunk all that resists his progress; over deep morasses or sloughs he drags himself on his knees and belly. When he has to cross a stream he ascertains the depth by his proboscis, advances slowly, and when he is out of his depth he swims, breathing through his trunk, which is visible when the whole of his body is submerged. He descends into ravines impassable by man, and by the aid of his trunk ascends steep mountains. His ordinary pace is about four to five miles an hour, and he will journey day and night if properly fed. When weary, he strikes the ground with his trunk, making a sound resembling a horn, which announces to his driver that he desires re-

pose. In Siam the howdah is a great roofed basket, in which the traveller, with the aid of his cushions, comfortably ensconces himself. The motion is disagreeable at first, but ceases to be so after a little practice.

"Elephants in Siam are much used in warlike expeditions, both as carriers and combatants. All the nobles are mounted on them, and as many as a thousand are sometimes collected. They are marched against palisades and entrenchments. In the late war with Cochin-China the Siamese general surprised the enemy with some hundreds of elephants, to whose tails burning torches were attached. They broke into the camp, and destroyed more than a thousand Cochin-Chinese, the remainder of the army escaping by flight.

"Of elephants in Siam, M. de Bruguières gives some curious anecdotes. He says that there was one in Bangkok which was habitually sent by his keeper to collect a supply of food, which he never failed to do, and that it was divided regularly between his master and himself on his return home; and that there was another elephant, which stood at the door of the king's palace, before whom a large vessel filled with rice was placed, which he helped out with a spoon to every talapoin (bonze) who passed.

"His account of the Siamese mode of capturing wild elephants is not dissimilar to that which has been already given. But he adds that in taming the captured animals every species of torture is used. He is lifted by a machine in the air, fire is placed under his belly, he is compelled to fast, he is goaded with

sharp irons, till reduced to absolute submission. The tame elephants co-operate with their masters, and, when thoroughly subdued, the victim is marched away with the rest.

"Some curious stories are told by La Loubère of the sagacity of elephants, as reported by the Siamese. In one case an elephant, upon whose head his keeper had cracked a cocoa-nut, kept the fragments of the nut-shell for several days between his forelegs, and having found an opportunity of trampling on and killing the keeper, the elephant deposited the fragments upon the dead body.

"I heard many instances of sagacity which might furnish interesting anecdotes for the zoölogist. The elephants are undoubtedly proud of their gorgeous trappings, and of the attentions they receive. I was assured that the removal of the gold and silver rings from their tusks was resented by the elephants as an indignity, and that they exhibited great satisfaction at their restoration. The transfer of an elephant from a better to a worse stabling is said to be accompanied with marks of displeasure."

If the elephant is in Siam the king of beasts, the white elephant is the king of elephants. This famous animal is simply an albino, and owes his celebrity and sanctity to the accident of disease. He is not really white (except in spots); his color is a faded pink, or, as Bowring states of the specimen he saw, a light mahogany. In September, 1870, however, a very extraordinary elephant arrived in Bangkok, having been escorted from Paknam with many royal honors. A large part of the body of this animal was

really white, and great excitement and delight was produced by its arrival at the capital. The elephant which Bowring saw and described died within a year after his visit. She occupied a large apartment within the grounds of the first king's palace, and not far off, in an elevated position, was placed a golden chair for the king to occupy when he should come to visit her. "She had a number of attendants, who were feeding her with fresh grass (which I thought she treated somewhat disdainfully), sugar-cane, and plantains. She was richly caparisoned in cloth of gold and ornaments, some of which she tore away and was chastised for the offence by a blow on the proboscis by one of the keepers. She was fastened to an upright pole by ropes covered with scarlet cloth, but at night was released, had the liberty of the room, and slept against a matted and ornamented partition, sloping from the floor at about an angle of forty-five degrees. In a corner of the room was a caged monkey, of pure white, but seemingly very active and mischievous. The prince fed the elephant with sugar-cane, which appeared her favorite food; the grass she seemed disposed to toss about rather than to eat. She had been trained to make a salaam by lifting her proboscis over the neck, and did so more than once at the prince's bidding. The king sent me the bristles of the tail of the last white elephant to look at. They were fixed in a gold handle, such as ladies use for their nosegays at balls."

There seems some reason for believing that the condition of the white elephant is not at present quite so luxurious as it used to be, and a correspond-

ent of Miss Cort is quoted as saying—"I think it is time the popular fallacy about feeding the white elephant from gold dishes, and keeping him in regal splendor was exploded. Except on state occasions it has no foundation in fact." Advancing civilization begins to make it evident, even to the Siamese, that there are other things more admirable and more worthy of reverence. It was noticed that the late second king, especially, did not always speak of the noble creature with the solemnity which ancient usage would have justified, and even seemed to think that there was something droll in the veneration which was given to it. But the superstition in regard to it is by no means extinct, and the presence of one of these animals is still believed to be a pledge of prosperity to the king and country. "Hence," says Bowring, "the white elephant is sought with intense ardor, the fortunate finder rewarded with honors, and he is treated with attention almost reverential. This prejudice is traditional and dates from the earliest times. When a tributary king or governor of a province has captured a white elephant he is directed to open a road through the forest for the comfortable transit of the sacred animal, and when he reaches the Meinam he is received on a magnificent raft, with a chintz canopy and garlanded with flowers. He occupies the centre of the raft and is pampered with cakes and sugar. A noble of high rank, sometimes a prince of royal blood (and on the last occasion both the first and second kings), accompanied by a great concourse of barges, with music and bands of musicians, go forth

to welcome his arrival. Every barge has a rope attached to the raft, and perpetual shouts of joy attend the progress of the white elephant to the capital, where on his arrival he is met by the great dignitaries of the state, and by the monarch himself, who gives the honored visitor some sonorous name and confers on him the rank of nobility. He is conducted to a palace which is prepared for him, where a numerous court awaits him, and a number of officers and slaves are appointed to administer to his wants in vessels of gold and silver."

It is believed that these albinos are found only in Siam and its dependencies, and the white elephant (on a red ground) has been made the flag of the kingdom. It is probable enough that the festival of the white elephant, which at the present day is celebrated in Japan (the elephant being an enormous pasteboard structure "marching on the feet of men enclosed in each one of the four legs"), may be a tradition of the intercourse between that country and Siam, which was formerly more intimate than at present.

"The white monkeys enjoy almost the same privileges as the white elephant; they are called *pája*, have household and other officers, but must yield precedence to the elephant. The Siamese say that 'the monkey is a man—not very handsome to be sure; but no matter, he is not less our brother.' If he does not speak, it is from prudence, dreading lest the king should compel him to labor for him without pay; nevertheless, it seems he has spoken, for he was once sent in the quality of generalissimo to

fight, if I mistake not, an army of giants. With one kick he split a mountain in two, and report goes that he finished the war with honor.

"The Siamese have more respect for white animals than for those of any other color. They say that when a talapoin meets a white cock he salutes him—an honor he will not pay a prince."

Tigers are abundant in the jungle, but are more frequently dangerous to other animals, both wild and domestic, than to men. The rhinoceros, the buffalo, bears, wild pigs, deer, gazelles, and other smaller animals inhabit the forests. Monkeys are abundant. In Cambodia Mouhot found several new species. And the orang-outang is found on the Malayan peninsula. Various species of cats, and among them tailless cats like those of Japan, are also to be found. Bats are abundant, some of them said to be nearly as large as a cat. They are fond of dwelling among the trees of the temple-grounds, and Pallegoix says (but it seems that the good Bishop must have overstated the case, as other travellers have failed to notice such a phenomenon) that "at night they hang over the city of Bangkok like a dense black cloud, which appears to be leagues in length."

Birds are abundant, and often of great size and beauty; some of them sweet singers, some of them skilful mimics, some of them useful as scavengers. Peacocks, parrots, parroquets, crows, jays, pigeons, in great numbers and variety, inhabit the forest trees.

What the elephant is in the forest, the crocodile is in the rivers, the king of creeping things. The

eggs of the crocodile are valued as a delicacy; but the business of collecting them is attended with so many risks that it is not regarded as a popular or cheerful avocation. It will be well for the collector to have a horse at hand on which he can take immediate flight. The infuriated mother seldom fails, says Pallegoix, to rush out in defence of her progeny.

"At Bangkok there are professional crocodile-charmers. If a person is reported to have been seized by a crocodile, the king orders the animal to be captured. The charmer, accompanied by many boats, and a number of attendants with spears and ropes, visits the spot where the presence of the crocodile has been announced, and, after certain ceremonies, writes to invite the presence of the crocodile. The crocodile-charmer, on his appearance, springs on his back and gouges his eyes with his fingers; while the attendants spring into the water, some fastening ropes round his throat, others round his legs, till the exhausted monster is dragged to the shore and deposited in the presence of the authorities." Father Pallegoix affirms that the Annamite Christians of his communion are eminently adroit in these dangerous adventures, and that he has himself seen as many as fifty crocodiles in a single village so taken, and bound to the uprights of the houses. But his account of the Cambodian mode of capture is still more remarkable. He says that the Cambodian river-boats carry hooks, which, by being kept in motion, catch hold of the crocodiles, that during the struggle a knot is thrown over the animal's tail, that

the extremity of the tail is cut off, and a sharp bamboo passed through the vertebræ of the spine into the brain, when the animal expires.

There are many species of lizards, the largest is the *takuet*. His name has passed into a Siamese proverb, as the representative of a crafty, double-dealing knave, as the takuet has two tongues, or rather one tongue divided into two." This is perhaps the lizard (about twice as large as the American bull-frog) which comes into the dwellings unmolested and makes himself extremely useful by his destruction of vermin. He is a noisy creature, however, with a prodigious voice. He begins with a loud and startling whirr-r-r-r, like the drumming of a partridge or the running down of an alarm-clock, and follows up the sensation which he thus produces by the distinct utterance of the syllables, "To-kay," four or five times repeated. He is not only harmless, but positively useful, but it takes a good while for a stranger to become so well acquainted with him that the sound of his cry from the ceiling, over one's bed for instance, and waking one from a sound sleep, is not somewhat alarming.

There is no lack of serpents, large and small. Pallegoix mentions one that will follow any light or torch in the darkness, and is only to be avoided by extinguishing or abandoning the light which has attracted him. There are serpent-charmers, as in other parts of India. They extract the poison from certain kinds of vipers, and then train them to fight with one another, to dance, and perform various tricks.

Pallegoix mentions one or two varieties of fish that

are interesting, and, so far as known, peculiar to Siamese waters. One, "a large fish, called the meng-phu, weighing from thirty to forty pounds, of a bright greenish-blue color, will spring out of the water to attack and bite bathers." He says there "is also a tetraodon, called by the Siamese the moon, without teeth, but with jaws as sharp as scissors. It can inflate itself so as to become round as a ball. It attacks the toes, the calf, and the thighs of bathers, and, as it carries away a portion of the flesh, a wound is left which it is difficult to heal."

Of centipedes, scorpions, ants, mosquitoes, and the various pests and plagues common to all tropical countries it is not necessary to speak in detail.

Sir John Bowring considered that sugar was likely to become the principal export of Siam, but thus far it would seem that rice has taken the precedence. The gutta-percha tree, all kinds of palms, and of fruits a vast and wonderful variety (among which are some peculiar to Siam), are abundant. The durian and mangosteen are the most remarkable, and have already been described. So far as is known, they grow only in the regions adjacent to the Gulf of Siam and the Straits of Sunda. And though there are many fruits common to these and to all tropical countries which are more useful (such as the banana, of which there are said to be in Siam not less than fifty varieties, "in size from a little finger to an elephant's tusk"), there are none more curious than these. The season of the mangosteen is the same with that of the durian. The tree grows about fifteen feet high, and the foliage is extremely glossy

and dark. The fruit may be eaten in large quantities with safety, and is of incomparable delicacy of flavor. No fruit in the world has won such praises as the mangosteen.

Of the mineral treasures of Siam, enough has been already indicated in the description of the wealth and magnificence which is everywhere apparent. We need only add that coal of excellent quality and in great abundance has been recently discovered, and that the country is also rich in petroleum, which awaits the wells and refineries by which it may be profitably used. Gold and silver mines are both known but little is produced from them. The government is obliged to import Mexican dollars in order to melt and recoin them in the new mint.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### CHRISTIAN MISSIONS IN SIAM — THE OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE

NO account of the present condition of Siam can be at all complete which does not notice the history of missionary enterprise in that country. Allusion has already been made to the efforts of Roman Catholic missionaries, Portuguese and French, to introduce Christianity and to achieve for the Church a great success by the conversion of the king and his people. The scheme failed, and the political intrigue which was involved in it came also to an ignominious conclusion; and the first era of Roman Catholic missions in Siam closed in 1780, when a royal decree banished the missionaries from the kingdom. They did not return in any considerable numbers, or to make any permanent residence until 1830. In that year the late Bishop Pallegoix, to whom we owe much of our knowledge of the country and the people (and who died respected and beloved by Buddhists as well as Christians), was appointed to resume the interrupted labors of the Roman Catholic Church. Under his zealous and skilful management, much of a certain kind of success has been achieved, but very few of the converts are to be found among the native Siamese. There is at pres-

ent on the ground a force of about twenty missionaries, including a vicar apostolic and a bishop, with churches at ten or a dozen places in the kingdom. Their converts and adherents are chiefly from the Chinese, Portuguese half-castes, and others who value the political protection conferred by the priests.

The religious success of the Protestant missionaries, which has not been over-encouraging, has also been in the first place, and largely, among the Chinese residents. A few Siamese converts are reported within the past few years, and their number is steadily increasing. The first Protestant mission was that of the American Baptist Board, which was on the ground within three years after the arrival of Bishop Pallegoix, though several American missionaries of other denominations had been in the country and translated religious books before this. The Baptists were followed within a few years by Congregationalists and Presbyterians from the United States. But "as time passed on one agency after another left the field, until to-day the entire work of Christianizing the Siamese is left to the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States," which began work in Bangkok of 1840.

At first sight their efforts, if measured by a count of converts, might seem to have resulted in failure. The statistics show but little accomplished; the roll of communicants seems insignificant. And of the sincerity and intelligence even of this small handful there are occasional misgivings. On the whole, those who are quick to criticise and to oppose foreign missions might seem to have a good argument and to

find a case in point in the history of missions in Siam.

But really the success of these efforts has been extraordinary, although the history of them exhibits an order of results almost without precedent. Ordinarily, the religious enlightenment of a people comes first, and the civilization follows as a thing of course. But here the Christianization of the nation has scarcely begun, but its civilization has made (as this volume has abundantly shown) much more than a beginning.

For it is to the labors of the Christian missionaries in Siam that the remarkable advancement of the kings and nobles, and even of some of the common people, in general knowledge and even in exact science, is owing. The usurpation which kept the last two kings (the first and second) nearly thirty years from their thrones was really of great advantage both to them and to their kingdom. Shut out from any very active participation in political affairs, their restless and intelligent minds were turned into new channels of activity. The elder brother in his cloister, the younger in his study and his workshop, busied themselves with the pursuit of knowledge. The elder, as a priest of Buddhism, turned naturally to the study of language and literature. The younger busied himself with natural science, and more especially with mathematical and military science. The Roman Catholic priests were ready instructors of the elder brother in the Latin language. And among the American missionaries there were some with a practical knowledge of various mechanical arts. It

was from them that the two brothers learned English and received the assistance and advice which they needed in order to perfect themselves in Western science. At a very early day they began to be familiar with them; to receive them and their wives on terms of friendly and fraternal intimacy; to send for them whenever counsel or practical aid was needed in their various philosophical pursuits and experiments. Through the printing-presses of the Protestant missions much has been done to arouse the people from the lethargy of centuries and to diffuse among them useful intelligence of every sort. The late king was not content until he established a press of his own, of which he made constant and busy use. The medical missionaries, by their charitable work among the rich, in the healing of disease and by instituting various sanitary and precautionary expedients, have done much to familiarize all classes with the excellence of Western science, and to draw attention and respect to the civilization which they represent. It is due to the Christian missionaries, and (without any disparagement to the excellence of the Roman Catholic priests), we may say especially to the American missionaries, more than to any enterprise of commerce or shrewdness of diplomacy that Siam is so far advanced in its intercourse with other nations. When Sir John Bowring came in 1855 to negotiate his treaty, he found that, instead of having to deal with an ignorant, narrow, and savage government, the two kings and some of the noblemen were educated gentlemen, well fitted to discuss with him, with intelligent skill and fairness, the important matters

which he had in hand. Sir John did his work for the most part ably and well. But the fruit was ripe before he plucked it. And it was by the patient and persistent labors of the missionaries for twenty years that the results which he achieved were made not only possible but easy.

Hitherto the Buddhist religion, which prevails in Siam in a form probably more pure and simple than elsewhere, has firmly withstood the endeavors of the Christian missionaries to supplant it. The converts are chiefly from among the Chinese, who, for centuries past, and in great numbers, have made their homes in this fertile country, monopolizing much of its industry, and sometimes, with characteristic thriftiness, accumulating much wealth. They have intermarried with the Siamese, and have become a permanent element in the population, numbering, in the coast region, almost as many as the native Siamese, or *Thai*. For some reason they seem to be more susceptible to the influence of the Christian teachers, and many of them have given evidence of a sincere and intelligent attachment to the Christian faith. The native Siamese, however, though acknowledging the superiority of Christian science, and expressing much personal esteem and attachment for the missionaries, give somewhat scornful heed, or no heed at all, to the religious truths which they inculcate. The late second king was suspected of cherishing secretly a greater belief in Christianity than he was willing to avow. But after his death, his brother, the first king, very emphatically and somewhat angrily denied that there was any ground for such suspicions concerning him.

For himself, though willing to be regarded as the founder of a new and more liberal school of Buddhism, he was the steady "defender of the faith" in which he was nurtured, and in the priesthood of which so many years of his life were passed. He seldom did anything which looked like persecution of the missionaries, but contented himself with occasionally snubbing them in a patronizing or more or less contemptuous manner. This attitude of contemptuous indifference is also that which is commonly assumed by the Buddhist priests. "Do you think," said one of them on some occasion to the missionaries, "do you think you will beat down our great mountains with your small tools?" And on another occasion the king is reported to have said that there was about as much probability that the Buddhists would convert the Christians, as that the Christians would convert the Buddhists.

But there can be little doubt with those who take a truly philosophical view of the future of Siam, and still less with those who take a religious view of it, that this advancement in civilization must open the way for religious enlightenment as well. Thus far there has come only the knowledge which "puffeth up." And how much it puffeth up is evident from the pedantic documents which used to issue from the facile pen of his majesty the late first king. A little more slowly, but none the less surely, there must come as well that Christian charity which "buildeth up." Even if the work of the missionaries should cease to-day, the results accomplished would be of immense and permanent value. They

have introduced Christian science; they have made a beginning of Christian literature, by the translation of the Scriptures; they have awakened an insatiable appetite for Christian civilization; and the end is not yet.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### BANGKOK AND THE NEW SIAM

"I DO not believe," says the Marquis de Beauvoir (in his "Voyage Round the World," vol. ii.), "that there is a sight in the world more magnificent or more striking than the first view of Bangkok. This Asiatic Venice displays all her wonders over an extent of eight miles. The river is broad and grand; in it more than sixty vessels lie at anchor. The shores are formed by thousands of floating houses, whose curiously formed roofs make an even line, while the inhabitants, in brilliant-colored dresses, appear on the surface of the water. On the dry land which commands this first amphibious town, the royal city extends its battlemented walls and white towers. Hundreds of pagodas rear their gilded spires to the sky, their innumerable domes inlaid with porcelain and glittering crystals, and the embrasures polished and carved in open-work. The horizon was bounded to right and left by sparkling roofs, raised some six or seven stories, enormous steeples of stone-work, whose brilliant coating dazzled the eyes, and bold spires from one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet in height, indicating the palace of the King, which reflected all the rays of the sun like a gigantic prism. It seemed as though

we had before us a panorama of porcelain cathedrals.

"The first general view of the Oriental Venice surpassed all that we could have hoped for in our travellers' dreams. We longed to get into gondolas and go through the lively canals which are the streets of the floating town, and where the bustle, animation, and noise bewildered us. . . . At length, jumping into a boat, we directed our rowers toward the tower of the Catholic mission by signs. We were nearly an hour crossing over, as we had to struggle against the rising tide. Thus we were able to study the details of the floating town while we went through its streets, or rather canals, between the crowded houses, each one of which formed a small island. We met and passed thousands of light boats, which are the cabs and omnibuses of Bangkok. The waving paddle makes them glide like nut-shells from one shop to another. Some were not much more than three feet long, with one Siamese squeezed in between piles of rice, bananas, or fish; others hold fifteen people, and are so crowded that one can hardly see the edge of the boat, which is a hollow palm-tree. . . .

"As to the children, who are scattered about in profusion, their dress consists of a daub of yellow paint; but they are most fascinating little things. I was charmed with them from the very first moment, but it grieves me to think that some day they will become as ugly as their fathers and mothers—and that is saying much! Their little hair-tufts, twisted round with a great gold pin, are surrounded by pretty wreaths of white flowers. They are merry and full

of tricks, and very pretty to see in their childish nakedness; yet they are more dressed than the grown-up young ladies who were bathing. Besides a heap of bracelets and necklaces of gold or copper gilt, with which they are covered like idols, they wear a small vine-leaf, cut in the shape of a heart, and hung round the waist by a slight thread. This hanging leaf, which is about two inches long and one and a half broad, marks their caste. For the rich it is gold, for the middle classes silver, for the poor red copper.

"The grandest and most characteristic pagoda is on the right bank, surrounded by a fine and verdant wood. It rises amidst a cluster of small towers which command a central pyramid three hundred feet high. This is at the base in the form of the lower part of a cone, with one hundred and fifty steps; then it becomes a six-sided tower with dormer windows supported by three white elephants' trunks; the graceful spire then rises from a nest of turrets, and shoots upward like a single column rounded off into a cupola at the summit; from thence a bronze gilt arrow extends twenty crooked arms that pierce the clouds. When lighted up by the rays of the sun it all becomes one mass of brilliancy; the enamelled colors of flaming earthenware, the coating of thousands of polished roses standing out in the alabaster, give to this pagoda, with its pure and brilliant architecture unknown under any other sky, the magical effect of a dream with the colossal signs of reality.

"As we approached it, gliding slowly along in a gondola against the impetuous current of the river, the

promontory looked like an entire town, a sacred town of irregular towers, crowded kiosques, painted summer-houses, colonnades and statues of pink marble and red porphyry. But on landing we had to pass the ditches and shallows which surround the sacred ramparts, where, walking with measured steps, was a whole population of men, with heads and eyebrows shaved, and whose dress was a long saffron-colored Roman toga. These were the 'talapoins,' or Buddhist priests. In one hand they hold an iron saucepan, and in the other the 'talapat,' a great fan of palm-leaves, the distinguishing sign of their rank. The lanes they live in are horribly dirty, and their houses are huts built of dirty planks and bricks, which are falling to pieces. One could imagine them to be the foul drains of the porcelain palaces which touch them, luckily hidden by bowers of luxuriant trees. More than seven hundred talapoins or 'phras' looked at us as we passed, with an indifference that bordered on contempt. And when we saw the sleepy and besotted priests of Buddha, who looked like lazy beggars, and the twelve or fifteen hundred ragged urchins who surrounded them in the capacity of choristers, and who grow up in the slums together with groups of geese, pigs, chickens, and stray dogs, it seemed a menagerie of mud, dirt, and vermin belonging to the monastery ; and we could not help noticing the remarkable contrast which exists between the fairy-like appearance of the temple as seen from the town, and the horrible condition of the hundreds of priests who serve it. . . .

"We only had to go up a few steps to pass from

PORTICO OF THE AUDIENCE HALL AT BANGKOK.

the dirty huts to marble terraces. We scaled the great pyramid as high as we could go; no such easy matter beneath a scorching sun which took away our strength, and blinded by the dazzling whiteness of the stone-work. But a panaroma of the whole town was now laid before us, with the windings of the river, the royal palaces, the eleven pagodas in the first enclosure, the two and twenty in the second, and some four hundred porcelain towers and spires, looking as though planted in a mound of verdure formed by the masses of tropical vegetation. In the symmetrical colonnades which we visited there are hundreds of altars, decorated with millions of statuettes of Buddha, in gold, silver, copper, or porphyry. On the left side is a very large temple with a five-storied roof in blue, green, and yellow tiles, and dazzling walls. A double door of gigantic size, all lacker-work inlaid with mother-o'-pearl, opened to us, and we were in the presence of a Buddha of colored stone-work. He was seated on a stool, nearly fifty feet high, his legs crossed, a pointed crown upon his head, great white eyes, and his height was nearly forty feet. This deified mass, altogether attaining to the height of ninety feet, is the only thing that remains unmoved at the sound of more than fifty gongs and tom-toms, which the bonzes beat with all their strength. Incense burns in bronze cups, and a ray of light penetrating the window strikes upon five rows of gilded statuettes which, in a body of two or three hundred, crouch at the feet of the great god, and baskets of splendid fruit are offered to them; you can imagine who eats it. Suits of armor are fixed

against the walls, and at certain distances the seven-storied umbrella hangs like a banner. As for the bas-reliefs, their description would take a whole volume; they represent all the tortures of the Buddhist hell. I shuddered as I looked on these wretched creatures, some fainting away, thrusting out their tongues, which serpents devoured, or picking up an eye torn out by the claw of an eagle, twisting round like tee-totums, or eagerly devouring human brains in the split skull of their neighbor. On the other side of these walls there are colored frescoes. The illustrations extend into a whole world of detail of the Buddhist religion, which varies in every part of Asia and is so impossible to separate from tradition, and so contradictory in its laws."

Each king in turn seems to wish to rebuild the royal residence, and here is a brief description, from Mr. Bock, of that which King Chulalonkorn has erected for himself: "Adjoining the old building is the new palace, called the Chakr Kri Maha Prasat, the erection of which has long been a favorite scheme of his majesty, who in 1880 took formal possession of the building. The style is a mixture of different schools of European architecture, the picturesque and characteristic Siamese roof, however, being retained. The internal fittings of this palace are on a most elaborate scale, the most costly furniture having been imported from London at an expense of no less than £80,000. One of the features of the palace is a large and well-stocked library, in which the king takes great interest—all the leading European and American periodicals being regularly taken in.

"Here the king transacts all state business, assisted by his brother and private secretary, Prince Devawongsa—usually called Prince Devan. These two are probably the hardest-worked men in the country, nothing being too great or too trivial to escape the king's notice. A friend of mine, who has had many opportunities of observing the king's actions, writes to me: 'Every officer of any importance is compelled to report in person at the palace, and the entire affairs of the kingdom pass in detail before his majesty daily. Although the king is obliged through policy to overlook, or pretend not to see, very many abuses in the administration of his government, yet they do not escape his eye, and in some future time will come up for judgment.'

"Inside the palace gates were a number of soldiers in complete European uniform, *minus* the boots, which only officers are allowed to wear. At the head of the guard, inside the palace gates, is the king's aunt, who is always 'on duty,' and never allows anyone to pass without a proper permit. Passing through a long succession of courts and courtyards, past a series of two-storied and white-washed buildings—the library, museum, barracks, mint, etc., all of which are conveniently placed within the palace grounds—we were led to an open pavilion, furnished with chairs and tables of European manufacture, in which were two court officers, neatly dressed in the very becoming court suit—snow-white jacket with gold buttons, a 'pa-nung,' or scarf, so folded round the body as to resemble knickerbockers, with white stockings and buckled shoes. . . .

"The ninth child of his father and predecessor on the throne, King Chulalonkorn has profited by the liberal education which that father was careful to give him, and, with a mind fully impressed by the advantages afforded by large and varied stores of knowledge, he has striven to give practical effect to the Western ideas thus early instilled in him. Born on September 22, 1853, he was only fifteen years of age when he came to the throne, and during his minority his Highness the Somdeth Chow Phya Boromaha Sri Suriwongse—an able and upright statesman, the head of the most powerful and noble family in the country, which practically rules the greater portion of Western Siam—acted as regent. . . . Although the king shows great favor to Europeans, he does not display any undue predilection for them, and only avails himself of their assistance so far as their services are indispensable, and as a means of leavening the mass of native officialdom. The example of the sovereign has not been without its effect on the minds of his native advisers, and the princes and officials by whom he is surrounded are rapidly developing enlightened ideas. This is the more important since many of the highest offices are hereditary, and there is consequently not the same scope for the choice by the king of men after his own heart which he would otherwise have. As one instance out of many, I may mention the case of his Highness Chow Sai, the king's body-physician, one of the last offices that one would suppose to be hereditary! Chow Sai is one of those princes who are favorably disposed toward Europeans; he is well

read, and some years ago sent his eldest son to be thoroughly educated for the medical profession in Scotland. Chow Sai's father, by the way, was a great believer in European medicines, especially Holloway's pills, of which he ordered the enormous quantity of ten piculs, or over 1,330 pounds; a large stock still remain, with their qualities, no doubt, unimpaired."

Before leaving the palace we may pause a moment to hear a quaint tale of Oriental cunning by means of which a former king succeeded in obtaining the jar of sacred oil still preserved here with religious care. The story, as told in Cameron's book,* reminds one of the artful dodges employed by zealous monks of the Middle Ages to secure saints' relics with their profitable blessings. "When the English took possession of Ceylon," relates the author, "Tickery Bundah and two or three brothers—children of the first minister of the King of the Kandians—were taken and educated in English by the governor. Tickery afterward became manager of coffee plantations, and was so on the arrival of the Siamese mission of priests in 1845 in search of Buddha's tooth. It seems he met the mission returning disconsolate, having spent some £5,000 in presents and bribes in a vain endeavor to obtain a sight of the relic. Tickery learned their story, and at once ordered them to unload their carts and wait for three days longer, and in due time he promised to obtain for them the desired view of the holy tooth. He had a check on the bank for £200 in his hands at the time, and this

* Our Tropical Possessions in Malayan India.

he offered to leave with the priests as a guarantee that he would fulfil his promise; he does not say whether the check was his own or his master's, or whether it was handed over or not. Perhaps it was the check for the misappropriation of which he afterward found his way to the convict lines of Malacca. The Siamese priests accepted his undertaking and unloaded the baggage, agreeing to wait for three days. Tickery immediately placed himself in communication with the governor, and represented, as he says, forcibly the impositions that must have been practised upon the King of Siam's holy mission, when they had expended all their gifts and not yet obtained the desired view of the tooth.

"The governor, who, Tickery says, was a great friend of his, appreciated the hardship of the priests, and agreed that the relic should be shown to them with as little delay as possible. It happened, however, that the keys of the mosque where the relic was preserved were in the keeping of the then resident councillor, who was away some eight miles elephant shooting. But the difficulty was not long allowed to remain in the way. Tickery immediately suggested that it was very improbable the councillor would have included these keys in his hunting furniture, and insisted that they must be in his house. He therefore asked the governor's leave to call upon his wife, and, presenting the governor's compliments, to request a search to be made for the keys. Tickery was deputed accordingly, and by dint of his characteristic tact and force of language, carried the keys triumphantly to the governor.

"The Kandy priests were immediately notified that their presence was desired, as it was intended to exhibit the great relic, and their guardian offices would be necessary. Accordingly, on the third day the mosque or temple was opened; and in the building were assembled the Siamese priests and worshippers with Tickery on the one side the Kandy or guardian priests on the other, and the recorder and the governor in the centre.

"After making all due offering to the tooth of the great deity, the Siamese head priest, who had brought a golden jar filled with otto of roses, desired to have a small piece of cotton with some of the otto of roses rubbed on the tooth and then passed into the jar, thereby to consecrate the whole of the contents. To this process the Kandy priests objected, as being a liberty too great to be extended to any foreigners. The Siamese, however, persevered in their requests, and the governor and recorder, not knowing the cause of the altercation, inquired of Tickery. Tickery, who had fairly espoused the cause of the Siamese, though knowing that in their last request they had exceeded all precedent, resolved quietly to gratify their wish; so in answer to the governor's interrogatory, took from the hands of the Siamese priest a small piece of cotton and the golden jar of oil. 'This is what they want, your honor; they want to take this small piece of cotton—so; and having dipped it in this oil—so; they wish to rub it on this here sacred tooth—so; and having done this to return it to the jar of oil—so; thereby, your honor, to consecrate the whole contents.' All the words of Tickery

were accompanied by the corresponding action, and of course the desired ceremony had been performed in affording the explanation. The whole thing was the work of a moment. The governor and recorder did not know how to interpose in time, though they were aware that such a proceeding was against all precedent. The Kandy priests were taken aback, and the Siamese priests, having obtained the desired object, took from Tickery's hands the now consecrated jar, with every demonstration of fervent gratitude. The Kandy priests were loud in their indignation; but the governor, patting Tickery on the back said, 'Tickery, my boy, you have settled the question for us; it is a pity you were not born in the precincts of St. James', for you would have made a splendid political agent!'

"Tickery received next morning a *douceur* of a thousand rupees from the priests, and ever since has been held in the highest esteem and respect by the King of Siam, also by the Buddhist priests, by whom he is considered a holy man. From the King he receives honorary and substantial tokens of royal favor. He has *carte blanche* to draw on the King for any amount, but he says he has as yet contented himself with a moderate draft of seven hundred dollars."

There used to be a story current in Bangkok that every new king made it his pious care to set up in one of the royal temples a life-size image of Buddha of solid gold. Though we need not believe this tale, it would be hard to exaggerate the impression of lavishness and distinction produced upon the visitor to this city, full of temples. Nothing in great China

or artistic Japan can compare with their peculiar brilliance or their wonderful array of color flashing in the tropical sunlight. We have no reason to repeat the enthusiastic descriptions which travellers never tire of giving, impressed as they are sure to be by an architecture which, with all its wealth and oddity of detail, harmonizes perfectly with the rich vegetation in the midst of which it is placed. Change and decay are, however, doing their part in reducing the picturesqueness of this strange city. No Oriental thinks of perpetuating a public monument by means of constant attention and repairs, and many of these gay edifices already lose their fine details by long exposure to the effects of a climate in which nothing endures long if left to itself. With the improvements introduced by the present king and his father are disappearing also many of those features of daily life in the capital which once heightened its oriental charm. A pleasure park has been made, in which, and on some of the new macadam roads about the city, the foreigners and richer natives drive in wheeled vehicles. So long, however, as the roads are covered by the annual inundations and made unserviceable for months at a time, the use of carriages must be almost as restricted here as that of horses in Venice. A more regrettable innovation is that of dress-coats, starched linens, and to some extent dresses, in the fashionable circles of Siam. Taken out of their easy and becoming costumes, and encased in ill-fitting and uncomfortable Western clothes, the Siamese nobles can hardly be said to have improved on the old days. With the removal of their nakedness the lower

classes, too, are becoming more conscious, while contact with a higher civilization has introduced vices among them without always bringing in their train the Christian virtues of cleanliness and truth.

The population of Bangkok increases steadily with its prosperity and influence, and is to-day variously estimated at from three hundred thousand to half a million souls, nearly half of whom perhaps are Chinese. Its main article of export is rice, which goes not only to every country of Asia, but to Australia and America. Sugar and spices, as well as all products of tropical forests, are also largely exported. The customs returns of 1890 show a considerable improvement of the Bangkok trade over previous years, the exports being $19,257,728 against $13,317,696 for 1889, a difference of over $5,540,000 ; the imports of 1890 were $15,786,120, against $9,599,541 in 1889, a gain of more than six millions.

Gas and kerosene are both used for illumination, the former in the palaces of royalty and the nobility, where the electric light has also been introduced. Foreign steam engines and machinery are employed in increasing numbers, while iron bridges span many of the smaller canals, and steam dredges keep the river channel clear. Telegraphic communication has long since been established with the French settlement of Saigon, in Cochin China, and thus with the outer world, and since the British occupation of Burmah a line is promised from Rangoon into Siam. A railway has been commenced between Bangkok and Ayuthia, to extend thence to Korat, a total distance of 170 miles; but the overflow of the Meinam, which

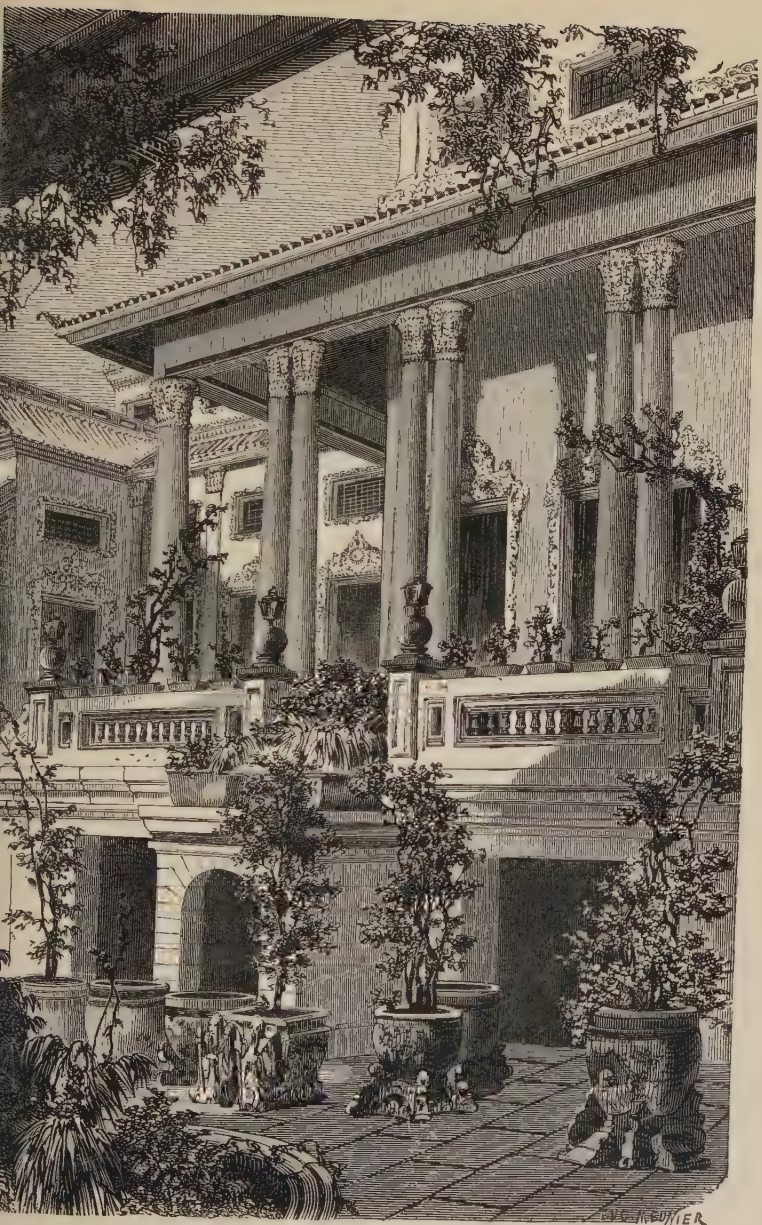
renders a considerable embankment or causeway along the river necessary, is a serious obstacle to its construction, while the great waterway itself renders a railroad less necessary in Siam than in other countries. Another line, from Bangkok to the mouth of the Pakong River, 36 miles southeast of the city, is also in contemplation ; while a design exists to eventually connect Zimmé with the sea by a line running the whole length of the Meinam Valley.

Thus the beautiful city, in awaking from the dream of its old, narrow life, must become by degrees like other busy trade centres of the civilized world, cursed with its sins as well as blessed with its strength and excellence. The tastes and education of the present sovereign have led him to hasten, so far as a single will could, this progress toward modern methods of living. He has abolished the ancient custom of prostration in the presence of a superior, so that now a subject may approach even his king without abasement. He has by degrees put an end to slavery as a legalized institution, throughout the country, and although many of his poorer subjects are hardly better off under the system of forced service than as actual slaves, the change, if only in some sort one of name, is a change for the better. He strives to make Bangkok the pulse of the kingdom, through which the life-blood of its commerce and control must course, achieving by his polity that highly centred system of administration, without which no pure despotism can be either beneficial or successful.

As an indication of the spirit that is quickening New Siam we should not forget to mention the ex-

hibition held in Bangkok in 1882, to celebrate the centennial of the present dynasty and of its establishment as the capital. An object-lesson on such a grand scale was of course a thing before unheard-of in Eastern Asia, but its benefits to the people of this region were both wide-spread and real, and are still to some extent active in the form of a museum where many of the exhibits are permanently preserved for examination and display. "The exhibition will be given"—run the words of the royal announcement—"so that the people may observe the difference between the methods used to earn a living one hundred years ago and those now used, and see what progress has been made, and note the plants and fruits useful for trade and the improved means of living. We believe that this exhibition will be beneficial to the country."

Miss Mary Hartwell, one of the American missionaries in Bangkok, in describing the exposition says: "Nothing there was more significant than its school exhibit. The Royal College was solicited to make an exhibit representing the work done in the school. This consisted chiefly of specimens of writing in Siamese and English, translations and solutions of problems in arithmetic, the school furniture, the text-books in use, and the various helps employed in teaching, such as the microscope, magnets, electric batteries, etc. The Siamese mind is peculiarly adapted to picking up information by looking at things and asking questions, and it is believed that this exhibit will not only enhance the reputation of the college, but give the Siamese some new ideas on the subject of education.



THE PALACE OF THE KING OF SIAM, BANGKOK.

"Miss Olmstead and I, together with our assistant, Ma Tuen, have been training little fingers in fancy-work, or rather overseeing the finishing up of things, to go to the exhibition. April 25th we placed our mats, tidies, afghans, rugs, cushions, needle-books, edgings, work-bags, and lambrequins in the cases allotted to our school in the Queen's Room, and on the 26th we were again at our posts to receive his Majesty the King, and give him our salutations upon his first entrance at the grand opening. He was dressed in a perfectly-fitting suit of navy-blue broadcloth, without any gaudy trappings, and never did he wear a more becoming suit. His face was radiant with joy, and his quick, elastic step soon brought him to us. He uttered an exclamation of pleasure at seeing us there, shook our hands most cordially, took a hasty survey of our exhibits, and then cried out with boyish enthusiasm, 'These things are beautiful, mem; did you make them?' 'Oh, no,' I responded, 'we taught the children, and they made them.' 'Have you many scholars?' was the next question. 'About thirty-one,' I answered. Turning again to the cases he exclaimed, emphatically, 'They are beautiful things, and I am coming back to look at them carefully—am in haste now.' And off he went to the other departments. Since then we see by the paper published in Bangkok, that his Majesty has paid the girls' school of Bangkok the high compliment of declaring himself the purchaser of the collection, and has attached his name to the cases."

"The king of this country," says a discriminating writer in the *Saturday Review*, "is no doubt one of

the monarchs whom it is the fashion to call 'enlightened.' But he understands the word in a very different sense from that which is often applied to it in London. He does not interpret it to mean a sovereign who throws about valuable lands and privileges to be scrambled for by all the needy adventurers and greedy speculators who are on the watch for such pickings. No; King Chulalonkorn and his ministers, many of whom are highly accomplished men, are sincerely anxious for the speedy development of the great resources over which they have command. They have shown, by the most practical proofs, that they have this desire and are able to carry it out. An extensive network of telegraphs has rapidly been established throughout their wide territory. Schools, hospitals, and other public buildings have been erected and are increasing every day. In 1888 a tramway company, mainly supported by Siamese capital, began running cars in the metropolis. A river flotilla company, wholly Siamese, carries the passenger traffic of the fine stream on which Bangkok is built; and in 1889 important gold-mining operations were begun by a company formed in London, in which the great majority of subscribers are Siamese nobles and other inhabitants of that country. Lastly, a well-known Englishman, formerly Governor of the Straits Settlements, obtained some years ago a contract for surveying a trunk line of railway in Siam, for which he was paid some £50,000 by the Siamese government.

"With these evidences staring us in the face, it would be very absurd to speak of the country or its

ruler as hanging back in the path of progress. One must, moreover, remember that, besides these signs of advancement, a free field has been and is opened to the wide employment of foreign capital in ordinary matters of trade. Rice-mills, saw-mills, and docks are doing a very large business, with very large profits to their owners, who consist of English, French, German, and Chinese capitalists. . . . A policy of reaction or inaction is the very reverse of that which Siam now professes; and the ruling powers in that country are as anxious as any foreigner to improve it in a wise, liberal, and even generous spirit. We have thus, on the one hand, a king and ministers sincerely desirous of promoting European enterprise, and, on the other hand, a European public hardly less ready to embark capital therein."

Unfortunately for Siam, there lies in the way of her advancement the same stumbling-block of extra-territoriality which has impeded the honest aspirations of other Asiatic states. The term implies those civil and judicial rights enjoyed by foreigners living in the East, who, under treaties for the most part extorted when the conditions were entirely different, exercise the privilege of governing and judging themselves independently of native officers and tribunals. In such eager and enlightened countries as Japan and Siam, this limitation to the autonomy of the sovereign is peculiarly humiliating as well as intensely unsuitable to existing conditions. The simplest measures of police ordinance and local government, even if it be a new liquor traffic law, or an opium farm regulation, cannot be carried into effect without the

separate consent of every European power, whether great or small, which has a consul in the place. Add to this the too common contingency of unjust or inefficient consuls, wholly unqualified for their offices, and their frequent inability to properly control the adventurers or aliens nominally residing under their flag, and the drawbacks to further improvement in Siam, as in other parts of Asia, may be dimly understood. With the revision of the antiquated treaties now in force commercial relations between Siam and the countries of Christendom would soon be established on a fair footing, to the mutual advantage of all parties interested.

THE END.

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